

A CALL TO  
**PRAVER,**  
IN TWO  
**SERMONS**  
On that Subject, lately Preached to a  
**COUNTRY-AUDITORY.**  
With an Account of the  
Principles and Practice  
OF THE  
**QUAKERS**  
In the matter of Prayer, subjoined.

Wherein is shewed, that the **QUAKERS** Religion is much wanting in Prayer, and they themselves grossly guilty of not calling upon God, and of fathering much impiety upon the Spirit of God, alledging him in defence of their Prayerless course.

*C. J. K*

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By the Author of *The Skirmish upon Quakerism.*

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Mark 14. 38, *Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.*

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**L O N D O N,**  
Printed in the Year, 1677.







# P R E F A C E

## TO THE

# R E A D E R.

**O**Ur blessed Saviour saith, *Luk. 16.8,*  
*That the children of this world are*  
*wiser in their generations than the*  
*children of light.* This I plainly see  
in the people called *Quakers*, who  
are more *vigilant* and *industrious* to propagate their  
Errors, and disperse their poysonous principles,  
than most Ministers of Christ are to teach and  
propagate the truth. And among the rest of the  
ways which the *Quakers* have used, this hath not  
been the least frequent, and they themselves do  
tell of the success of it, namely, Their printing of  
small Pamphlets, and spreading and divulging  
them up and down the Country. And it being  
a certain truth, That all error is grateful to the  
flesh, and tendeth to licentiousness and carnality  
one way or other; we need not wonder of their  
erroneous books, and pernicious printed principles

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ples, do meet with ready reception with many, that finding *the way of truth a strait and narrow way*, are glad to meet with teachers, and writings, and principles, that can promise them the favour of God, and forgiveness of sins, and peace of Conscience, and everlasting life, upon such grounds, and in such a way as will well consist with their lusts; it being the very work of all false teachers (as such) to turn people out of the strait and narrow way which leadeth to life, and to lead people to heaven by a more easie, worldly, and flesh-pleasing way than Christ and Scripture do. This I plainly gather from our Saviours words, *Mat. 7. 13, 14*, for after he had given us that piercing command and counsel, *Enter ye in at the strait gate : for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat ; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life ; and few they be which find it ;* he doth immediately subjoin, *v. 15, Beware of false Prophets, which come to you in sheeps clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.* Thereby clearly insinuating, that the work and design of false prophets and teachers, is to turn us out of the strait and narrow way of life, and under pretence of holiness and strict living, to make us powerfully unholy, and to fasten wickedness, pride, and carnality in us by a law.

I shall not imitate Satan the grand master, and his factors and chief instruments in evil ; but I  
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may learn a piece of Christian policy from them, and that is, to do that for the *truth* which they do for *error*, and to do something for the *warning* and *saving* of souls, as they do for the *poysoning* and *undoing* of them; and to put on like zeal for my Master his honour, and his interest, and his ways, as these pernicious teachers since their first rising have done for their master and his religion and ways, though I fear I shall not have the like success; for Satan hath more *heart-followers* and proselytes than Christ, and if the truth were as pleasing to peoples corrupted natures as error is, it would meet with more welcome entertainment in the world; and he who is *truth* it self, and came to bear *witness* to the *truth*, would not have been put to death as a deceiver and enemy of the truth.

It is not any thing truly good and commendable in these people that I am against; I am so far from that, and from perswading any to condemn any thing that is of God in them, that I do make it an essential piece of my Religion to love and like whatsoever of God I see in any people whomsoever; and at the same time when I speak against *sin* and *error*, to bear due respect and compassion to the *soul*; and also I would be far from making all errors and sins alike, and caution both my self and others to beware of passing rash censure, and damning any for such *errors* as be not *reigning* nor *fundamental*, and which an impartial discerning charitable man may ground-

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stedly hope to be consistent with true grace and practical holiness; which whether their errors be, or be such as do subvert all sound Religion, it behoves all people to be wise and wary how they affirm or deny; for the like wo is threatned to them which *call evil good*, as to them which *call good evil*, Isa. 5. 20. and to say of any Religion that it is damnable when it is not, or to say that it is consistent with salvation when it is not, are both alike fatal to the soul. It is to be considered, that besides the difference that is in *errors*, there is also great difference in the *holding* and *living* of them, as there is in *holding* and *living* of the *truth*; for a man may hold very strange and foul errors, and yet not hold them practically; and some very illuminated and experienced servants of God do think, that a Christian may hold an error fundamental, ignorantly, and yet not hold it practically; and so holding his *error* but *notionally* and as a *lifeless opinion* (as we see many thousands do the truth) and holding *essential truths* *practically* he shall be saved: though no wise man would for this take up that or any other error, and run the hazard of his soul by it; for it is to be supposed that he who holdeth an error doth not know that he doth so; for if he know it to be an error, then it ceaseth to be an error in his understanding, and so he doth not err with his understanding; but it turns into a *lust* or *known idol*, which he wilfully adhereth to, and espouseth and holdeth fast upon the account  
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of carnal interest, and so it cannot consist with true grace. For it can no more consist with true grace, habitually and practically to hold and allow the *least known error*, than to live and allow a mans self in the *least known sin*.

I would be loath to fasten any error upon any person, which I can perceive him not to hold; and I would candidly interpret all words so far as I can with Conscience and Justice to the truth, and put a wide difference between verbal and real differences. Many controversies of seeming great import, are but *de nomine*, the disputants hold the same thing, but want skill to open the truth nakedly, and understand one anothers sense; and pride, and self-love, make them too unwilling to unite all they can. And some controversies, *de re*, comparatively are but small; if poysoned wits, and graceless hearts did not make them great by their fiery and uncharitable fleshly zeal. But the controversies between us and *Quakers* (to pass by those smaller about *you* and *thou*, and names, and days, and some other of less moment) are about the chiefeest points, their errors are very gross. Mr. *Faldo* hath given you a Catalogue of them in the Preface to his Book, *Quakerism* no Christianity. I engage not in the defence of all he saith, nor take things upon trust. Their grand error is of the light within; they lay such stress upon this, that all by their opinion are damned, that are not in the light within. By enquiry into their Books, we can scarce tell what they mean by this light,

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they say, and unsay; they say it is not God, nor Christ, and the Holy Spirit; they say it is not any created light or effect of God; otherwhiles they say it is God and Christ, they set it above the Scriptures, they place such a sufficiency in the light within, to Salvation, that down from the sin of *Adam*, throughout every age and succession of time, all healing informing remedy, and soul recovering means are made void, all divine and humane teachings, the whole fabrick of Redemption; nay, I do not know but by their opinion of the light within, Devils and damned souls may be saved. They subvert the Ministry of Christ, Baptism and the Lords Supper, Prayer, Preaching, Confession, Thanksgiving, Repentance, Faith, Holiness, and turn all into waiting to the light within, and feeling to that of God, which is in every man, without pointing him to any other Saviour, Regenerator, Guide, and sanctifier, than this light within. These are their capital errors; in the maintaining whereof they are more zealous, than I think any of us all are for God and Salvation: conceiting themselves to be right in their cause and principles, they Father all upon God, and vouch his Holy Spirit for the Author of all. Many I confess have wrote against them. I think I have call to write too. Each one must answer for himself to God. I love my Master, and his truth, and souls, and hope by writing to do more good than hurt; and this is my defence and reason to all that shall demand a reason of my writing. I



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expect to please but a few by any writings of mine; if the impartial, sober, judicious, and godly shall approve them, or so far as to think them tolerable, I can well abide the censures of others, and to be accounted weak and worse. I am not of their mind that think we should send forth nothing into the world but what is most polite and exact, and may be worthy of fame and glory, or that we must be all our days in composing a book to stand for all ages, and seal it up with *Ovids* self-glorying praise in the end of his *Metamorphosis*; *Jamque opus exegi, &c.* Faith and self-denial teach us other lessons. I honour wisdom, invention, method, art, and labour in all our works. We cannot be too exact to please God; but God is often pleased with that which man despiseth; and that which is of high esteem with men, is abomination with God.

It grieves me much that I cannot open the *Quakers* Errors, and confute them without offending them. Guilt is tender, and cannot endure to be touched, especially so nearly as I am like to do; for I had rather do nothing, than cure a wound by the halves, and leave it worse than I found it. I thirst after the winning of their souls; and alas, whilst I am truest to their souls, I am most an enemy to their errors and corrupted hearts; and my Physick is so sharp, I fear many of my patients will rather refuse the Medicine, and run the hazard of the Disease, than abide such lancing and excoriating cures. How must one  
do?

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do? can one heal a sore, and not heal it from the bottom? error is gotten into their heads and hearts; out it must, or it will danger to be their death. We must be tender and compassionate, but withal faithful; wise, but wise to save and win their souls, not to hurt them. My aim is right, if I shoot short or wide, or beyond my mark (which is easie to do in morality, and in going about to heal soul-wounds); I do earnestly beg of the *Quakers* that they will not therefore be prejudic'd against the truth, nor blame my Master and his wayes, because his stewards and servants are not so wise as they should be. As for me, let them say of me what they please, so I can win them to God and the truth, I'll give them leave to repute me what they will.

If any shall write against me, I shall desire but this reasonable request, that he will not pick at every word. If any shall say, I ought so to write as to give no occasion at all by any word or wrong sentence, I acknowledg I ought, and desire not to excuse or shelter any error; but will you but be as charitable and inoffensive a Reader as you would have me to be an inoffensive writer? you would not have me to offend by writing; I beg no more from you but that you will be the same in reading, and not carp and except at every word or syllable, but gather my meaning so far as the words and sense will bear.

The Sermons concerning Prayer have no con



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controverſie-matter in them that I know, except the great one of all between Chriſt and Satan, Sin and the Soul. They are too plain to pleaſe many, if you like them not, let them alone, there be enough better, and I would have you to have the beſt. It is not friends importunity and good liking which moves me to print them, though that is not nothing: but in this luxuriant bookiſh age I think that reaſon not enough, nor near enough, at leaſt not for me. But I take prayer to be a weighty matter, and prayerleſs ſouls to be many, and the work of prayer to be much neglected, and many and loud calls we have all to Prayer; and why may I not publiſh a few ſheets of prayer? but chiefly I would tempt the *Quakers* to the work of Prayer, and let them ſee what ſlender cauſe they have to judg ſo hardly of our praying.

I know not but ſome other things (paſſed out of my hands) may alſo come forth with this. If not yet, in time they may. Thou haſt much of my mind in this Preface to ſave me the labour of more words that way of giving account of my writing. I commit thee to God, in whom I am

Warrington, Octob.

4, 1676.

*A Servant of Chriſt, and  
thy Souls Friend,  
J. C.*



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To my dearly Beloved, and longed for  
the People of God, in *W. and B. J. C.*  
wisheth Grace and Peace in our Lord  
Jesus Christ.

**Y**OU and others will admire, as I  
do at my self, to see me thus ap-  
pearing in publick. Truly it was  
far from my thoughts once, yea it  
is against many, and many past  
resolutions: but whether it be well or ill, my thoughts  
are changed; and here I tender to you a piece of  
Christian instruction and admonition, touching  
prayer. If the method and composure were but an-  
swerable to the weight of the subject, I would not  
fear the censure of pride for offering it to you and  
others; and I would by Argument press upon you the  
perusal of it, though you may have better helps at  
hand, and many of you are far more fit to be my in-  
structors. In this place I have been born, and brought  
up among you all the beginning of my time; and so  
far as I can collect, by tracing and comparing the  
several steps and passages of my life, it was in this  
place, and before I went to live in the Countrey,  
that I first received the seeds of grace (supposing  
according to my hopes, that God hath had mercy  
upon

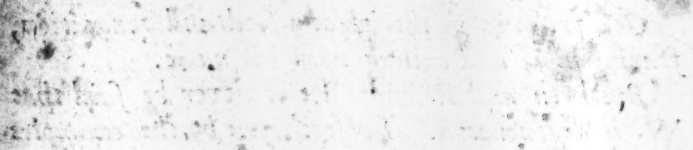
upon my soul) though I cannot so much as tell the year, much less the day or month, nor the particular way or means how the Lord did work in me, though many things I can remember while I was young, and a Junior at School. Since my entrance into the Ministry, I have been mostly conversant here, and look upon it as a choice effect of merciful and wise disposing providence, which hath placed me in, and so near my native place, though I have had sundry temptations to other places. If therefore I have any thing which may be of use to Christs Church, since the custom of writing hath made it a kind of Law to inscribe their writings, to some one or more persons especially: Some out of sincerity, and upon just grounds, others out of mode and complement, and to flatter and draw into snare, playing the hypocrite, and practising much baseness, and carnal insinuation. I also, that I may not seem to be needlessly singular, do ascribe this to you, not making any dedication, but as a Minister and Friend to your souls, earnestly inviting you to prayer, and care, and diligence for your souls, acknowledging my self in the bonds of the Gospel, to be debtor to you above all people, and willing to take any fit opportunity of expressing my forwardness for the good of your souls, and doing all that in me lies, for the good of my native Town and Place, notwithstanding the envy and opposition of many. Let them not spare to say, and do their utmost, they cannot hinder and restrain me from pitying and praying for them. This shall be the defence I will make, and  
the

the harm I mean to do them, though in my Masters cause and quarrel, I will not fear to wound sin, and strike at the heart of soul-destroying lusts, in any friend or foe.

God preserve in this place a seed and generation, fearing him, and calling upon his name.

Brethren and Friends, let it never be said that W. is degenerated. I beseech you by the examples of them that be gone before, whose names are precious with many of you, to do worthily in your generation, and at least wise to leave things to your children and posterity in as good condition as you found them to your hands. I know it is not with W. in many things, as sometime it hath been; and the necessity, I was a saying the iniquity of the times hinders good things from us. But do your duty in your closets and families, be holy in all manner of conversation, maintain the communion of the Saints, unite, and love, and delight in each other, be true to conscience, and practise such duties as shall come in your way, to which flesh and blood makes resistance, and carnality is apt to shuffle off with unwarrantable excuses and half-doing: Lay up your treasure in Heaven, and confide in God, and with humility, wisdom, patience, sincerity, courage, and self-denial; walk before God, and do all that in you lies for the reforming of this sinful place.

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## PSAL. LV. 17.

*Evening and morning , and at noon  
will I pray, and cry aloud.-----*



Hope I shall not offend any by the choice of my Text: it leads me to speak of Prayer, a most harmless subject, most necessary for us all. You may hear frequently of it, and great reason there is, because it is a duty of daily practice, hardly learn'd, and hardlier practis'd. None that have any fear of God in them, and have any care of their Souls, can find fault with prayer, or think this to be a low and needless subject.

This Psalm (penned as we suppose by *David*) doth give us an account of the great sorrow and distress that *David* was in, because of the insolency and treachery of his Enemies. *He mourned in his complaint, and made a noise, v. 2. His heart was sore pained within him, and the terrors of death were fallen upon him; fearfulness and trembling were come upon him, and horror had overwhelmed him, v. 4, 5. His Enemies were many, and night and day they sought to do him mischief, slander and be-lying*

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him, and using both violence and deceit, v. 3, 9, 10.  
 11. And that which did most go to his heart was, that they were such as formerly had been his familiars and acquaintance, and professed much love, and he had had sweet counsel and fellowship with them, and now they were turn'd to be his enemies, v. 12, 13, 14. In this distress this precious servant of God betakes himself to prayer, as his best help and remedy; v. 16, *As for me, I will call upon God, and the Lord shall save me.* V. 17, *Evening and morning, and at noon will I pray, and cry aloud, and he shall hear my voice.*

1. The words, as you see, contain *Dauids* resolution to pray, *I will pray, and cry aloud.*

2. The frequency and season, when and how often he would pray, *Evening and morning, and at noon.* Which notes, 1. That he would do it daily; he would make it his constant practice to pray and cry aloud to God. 2. That he would do it at certain times and seasons, *evening and morning, and at noon*; he would not content himself to do it every day, but he would do it in the fittest seasons, and state unto himself his hour and time of prayer in the evening, and keep to it: and so his hour and time of prayer in the morning, and at noon, and observe it.

From the words thus opened, we may gather these Doctrines:

Doct. 1. *That in all distresses, trials and afflictions that can befall a Christian in this world, prayer is one chief and principal remedy.* This is the course that



that *David* being in great trouble, betook himself unto.

Doct. 2. *That Prayer is a duty of great weight.* This we may gather from the whole, *David* makes chief use of it in all his straits, and hath such esteem of it, that he resolves upon the doing of it daily; morning, evening, and at noon, and assures himself that God will hear and save him.

Doct. 3. *That it is not enough for a Christian to pray to God, but he must pray fervently, he must cry aloud to God, and pour out his soul to God with all his might.*

Doct. 4. *It is not enough for a Christian to pray, but moreover he is to be frequent and assiduous in the duty of Prayer, and observe unto himself stated times, and meetest seasons of Prayer all that in him lyes, in imitation of holy David here, Evening and morning, and at noon will I pray, and cry aloud.*

I'll forbear to speak distinctly to the first of these, and insist upon the other three in order, as time will give leave.

Doct. 2. *That Prayer is a duty of great weight, a most excellent, and profitable, and necessary duty.*

To prevent misunderstanding I will open to you the true nature of Prayer, what it is; for many do not understand it, many do grossly mistake it. An error in this may come to be very fatal.

1 *Negatively.* Right Prayer, such as God doth accept to Salvation, is not to be found save in real Saints, and such as be regenerate. It is not meer words, whether more or fewer, nor a meer work

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of nature, and bare humane industry and striving, without the special grace and concurrence of God. It is not ceremony and complement, it is not crying, Lord, Lord, and seeming as if we were most sincere, and taking upon us as if we were most devout, and desir'd nothing so much as the Grace of God, and the forgiveness of sins, and spiritual everlasting mercies to make us holy and happy. There is a great deal of praying outwardly, which is not right and sincere praying; outward balling and canting, and such desires as spring from meer nature and carnality, or from a frightned Conscience, and meer pangs of fear, without any spiritual change upon the Soul, is not the genuine prayer of a Saint, and none other doth God accept as a condition or evidence of spiritual life and title to spiritual and everlasting mercies.

2. But positively and more descriptively. Right Prayer is gracious, and good desires well and duly offered up to God by a regenerate soul in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. I shall not labour to be curious in defining, so I can truly open to you what right Prayer is. Now to take this description in pieces, and open it to you *membratim*, piece by piece.

1. I say that right Prayer must be done by a regenerate soul, because the tree must be good before it can bring forth good fruit; and the heart must be circumcised, and made new by the grace of God, before it can make a godly prayer. Our Saviours reason for regeneration is unanswerable, *Joh. 3. 3, 6.*

*That*

*That which is born of the flesh is flesh*; it is true both of persons and actions, till we be regenerate we are flesh and not spirit, the flesh reigns in us, we are carnal and unholy.

2. I say, that right Prayer doth consist of good and gracious desires. It is not enough to be regenerate, for even a regenerate man may have corrupt desires, such as be unwarrantable, and upon the matter sinful. We do not always desire that which is pleasing to God, and finally good for our souls, and those are the desires which for the matter I account good and gracious, which be pleasing to God, and make for the final everlasting good of the soul. Whatsoever desire it is which is forbidden by God, and hath no warrant from the will of God, nor rationally tendeth to the final good of the soul, but all things weighed, is hurtful and evil to the soul, that is not to be put into our prayers. And this is clear from the Lords-Prayer, which doth limit us to such things as tend to the hallowing of Gods name, the setting up of his Kingdom, and the doing of his will.

3. It is not enough that the person be regenerate, and have good and gracious desires in his soul, but these desires are to be offered up to God, and it is the offering of them up to God, which makes it to be a prayer. And this is easily evident both from Scripture and the work of Prayer it self. From Scripture, which expresseth the work and business of Prayer by words, importing an exercise or stirring up of the soul, a drawing nigh to God, and

pouring out our complaint before him, and seeking his face, and calling upon his name. Reason, and the thing it self tells us, that it is one thing to have good desires and good dispositions in the heart, and another thing to pour out those desires and dispositions to God. The heart doth first conceive and meditate good thoughts, intentions, and desires, and then doth present and offer up the same to God by way of supplication, *Psal. 141. 2, Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening-sacrifice.*

4. But neither is this all: it is not enough barely to offer up good and gracious desires to God, but also I add, that they must be well and duly offered up to God, as I shall shew under the second Doctrine to be handled next. Only for the present you may note, that a good man may offer up good and gracious desires to God, that is good for the matter of them, and yet he may not offer them up rightly and duly to God, *Jam. 5. 16, The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* It must not only be the prayer of a righteous man, but it must be fervent, there must be a right behaving of our selves in the work and business of Prayer; the manner as well as the matter must be pleasing to God, and profitable to us. A godly man may pray coldly, irreverently, deadly, lukewarmly, so as God may be provoked, *Rev. 3. 16.*

5. Then all right Prayer it must be directed and offered up to God, and not to Creatures. I shall not insist upon this, hoping you are competently instructed



structed and understood in that, and my time not allowing me to speak to all matters.

6. Lastly, I add in the description, that all right Prayer must be in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, *Col. 3. 17, Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God, and the Father by him.* This hath been the constant practice of the Saints; which is not so to be understood as if the bare naming of Christ were enough. There is much formal praying in the name of Christ, and begging for his sake; but to pray in the name of Christ, is to relie upon the merits of Christ for acceptance; and to look for no gracious and comfortable audience with God but for the sake of Christ; and to trust upon his intercession and meritorious grace and ransom, for the favour of God, and his gracious countenance upon us and our prayers. And this briefly for the opening to you the true nature of Prayer. I shall now confirm the point to you by Scriptural reasons and arguments, that Prayer thus stated is a very excellent and weighty duty of exceeding great moment to all our souls.

A. 1. Our blessed Saviour hath thought it most meet to give us a plat-form of Prayer, for method most exact, and for matter comprehensive of all things we need from God; and hath given it for a rule to Christian souls to the worlds end; teaching us, *When ye pray, say, Our Father, &c.* and *after this manner pray ye, &c.* by which variation of the Gospel-text it is gathered by some, that this form

of Prayer may be godlily used as a Prayer, for the words are, *When ye pray, say, our Father, &c.* and by the other words, *after this manner pray ye*, it is gathered, that Christ meant not to tye us to these very precise words and no other, but that we make this our rule or platform of prayer, beginning with a Preface, consisting of six Petitions, and a Thanksgiving, and a Conclusion, *Amen*. Now Christs care in this matter prescribing to his Church a rule of Prayer most exact for matter and method, this proves prayer to be a matter of great moment, and the Gospel-Church in this to be priviledged above the Church under the Law.

A. 2. The practice of Jesus Christ himself, and of all his Saints in all ages of the world, is a sufficient confirmation that Prayer is a most excellent duty of great moment. Jesus Christ had no sin to beg the forgiveness of, nor any stains or defects in his soul, nor any such necessities upon him as we have, and yet he prayed; he rose up be-time in a morning to prayer, when he had dispatched his days-work in preaching the Gospel, and working Miracles, and doing good to mens souls and bodies, he retir'd himself for Prayer, he went into desarts, and mountains, and woods to pray, and continued all night in Prayer to God, and he pray'd with strong crying and tears; and it was in prayer that the Holy Ghost came down upon him at his Baptism, and the heaven was opened, and a voice came down from heaven which said, *Thou art my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased*, Luk. 3. 21, 22. Also the  
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Scripture notes, that it was in prayer that he was transfigured in the Mount, and the fashion of his countenance was altered, *Luk. 9. 28, 29.* Now this is a great evidence of the excellency and necessity of prayer, that the spotless and most blessed Son of God should thus go before us in prayer, and honour it with his example, who had no sin, nor foul-wants as we have. 2. Then for the Saints practice, the Scripture is full in this; and could we but see the records of every age, we might plainly see there was never Saint in the world to this day which had time and leisure for prayer, but he was a praying-Saint. The thief upon the Cross that was converted at the point of death, died praying, *Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.* The Scripture takes notice of it in *Paul*, so soon as the Lord had effectually touched his heart, he began to pray, *Act. 9. 11, Behold he prayeth.* No doubt but *Paul* prayed many a time before, for the Pharisees were great prayers, and *Paul* was a most zealous Pharisee; but his praying then did very much differ from his praying now. The new-born soul comes crying into the new world; and mostly souls go out of the world with prayer in their mouths, as *Stephen*, *Lord Jesus receive my spirit, and lay not this sin to their charge.* So also died our Saviour, *Father forgive them, they know not what they do; and into thy hands I commit my spirit.* We read of *Jacob* wrestling with God in prayer; *Abraham* praying and interceding for *Sodom*; *Isaac* praying for his Wife *Rebecca*, that she might conceive; and going into the fields at even-  
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tide to pray, *Gen.* 24.63. for the word translated, *meditate*, signifies also to pray, *marg.* *Moses* was a man of prayer, so *Joshua*, *David*; what is the Book of *Psalms* for a great part, but a composition of godly prayers? the godly Kings of *Judah*, the Prophets, and holy men and women of old, have all been praying-people. Come to the New Testament, and this aboundeth with precepts and rules of prayer, and with instances and examples too. *John* taught his Disciples to pray, our Saviour his; the Primitive Christians continued with one accord in prayer, their prayer is set down, *Act.* 4. 24. We read of the joint prayers of many, and single ones; the Scripture up and down records the prayers of the Saints. Without doubt all that are Saints, are praying Saints. The universal practice of the people of God, not one but of all, in all times and places, is a clear confirmation that Prayer is a most excellent and weighty duty.

A. 3. The spirit of Grace is a spirit of supplications, *Zach.* 12. 10. So that whensoever the grace of God comes into any soul, there comes a disposition of prayer; all grace doth contain in it essentially a breathing and thirsting after God, and after righteousness, which is as the life or soul of prayer, and is in every Saint; so that he hath a praying spirit in him, *Gal.* 4. 6, *And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his son into your hearts, crying Abba father.* A child of God walks with God by prayer, he prays more and oftner than he prays with his voice; there be inward sighs  
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and groans, and desires in his heart presented and offered up to God. Grace cannot live, and work, and dwell in the soul without prayer. Let a Saint be in any part of the world, he must have time and room for prayer; he cannot stop his soul from praying; though Grace do not act in the soul *per modum naturæ* by natural instinct, and such a necessity and motion as the fire burns, and a beast desires fodder, by a natural irrational propensity; yet prayer is so essential to Grace, and the new Creature, that of all duties a child of God is most apt to this. Meditation is a great and excellent duty, but not so excellent as Prayer; for there is more upon the heart in Prayer, than there is in Meditation; there is more of man in Meditation, and more of God in Prayer; in Meditation man speaketh unto man, but in Prayer man speaketh unto God; and so far as he prays rightly, his soul is wholly intent upon God, and poureth out his complaint before God, and pleadeth with God, and nothing hath leave so much as to look into the soul, and distract it, so far as it is rightly engaged in the work of Prayer, and gathereth in all the powers of his soul, and presenteth the whole man in service and sacrifice to God, and maketh a tender of himself, and all he hath and can do, to the service and glory of God. Many a child of God that can hardly frame himself to meditate, and is confused and distracted in it, in Prayer is most methodical, and all his Graces fall into order and natural method, that is, so as doth best suit with his wants, and helps to the actuating of the soul  
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God-wards; so that every grace of God is more or less exercised in Prayer. Charity, which is the universal grace, and is as the heart and pith of all grace, sincere love to God and man, is chiefly exercised in Prayer; for what is Prayer but the exercise of desire? and what is desire, but the exercise or expression of love, or the motion of the soul towards a suitable good? If you could but open the breast of a Saint, except it be in some notable distemper and spiritual apoplexy upon his soul, you will find the pulse of his soul beating God-ward by prayer, he keeps his heart going by prayer; you may chain and fetter his body, and muzzle his tongue, but you cannot muzzle the mouth of his soul, nor stop the new Creature in him from ascending upwards to God. But whilst there is grace in the soul, there will be a habit or root of prayer; and the more grace, the more strong and lively, and constant and sweet will be the disposition to prayer.

A. 4. The many Promises which God hath made to prayer, and in that he styles himself by the name of God that heareth prayer, and therefore to him shall all flesh come, *Psal. 65. 2.* and in that God hath not only given us multitudes of commands for it, but also he hath made it a condition on our part, without which we may not look for any of his blessings; all this doth prove that prayer is a most weighty and excellent duty. To relate all the promises of God made to prayer, were to rehearse a great part of the Bible, *Psal. 50. 15, Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou*

thou shalt glorifie me. Rom. 10. 13, *Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.* Mat. 7. 7, &c. *Ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you; for every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.* Isa. 45. 19. *I never said unto any of the seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain.* Jam. 4. 4. *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.* 1 Joh. 5. 14, 15, *This is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us; and if we know that he hears us, whatsoever we ask we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.* Isa. 65. 24, *Before they pray I will answer, and while they are yet a speaking I will hear.* And multitudes of places more might be cited. I know well that these Promises are not made to prayer solitary and alone, no more is any saving-promise made to any grace or duty solitary and without the presence and connection of other Graces. But prayer on our part is a condition imposed upon us by our heavenly father, and supream King; and if we pray not, God is under no promise to grant us mercy. He hath promised *a new heart, and a new spirit, and to cleanse us from all our idols, and to put his fear within us, and cause us to walk in his statutes,* Ezek. 36. 25, 26, 27. But he will be sought unto, and we must seek him, and enquire of him to do these things for us, ver. 37. And there is all the reason in the world for it. Are we worthy

thy of mercies that will not beg them? Can we have them upon cheaper and more honourable terms? Is not heaven and everlasting glory worth begging? Christ hath taught us to pray for our daily bread, how much more are we to pray for the favour of God, forgiveness of sin, and everlasting mercies? If our mercies come not by the way of prayer, nor engage and put us on to prayer, it were better be without them; he that prays not, is a stranger to the grace of God, and the saving blessings of his Covenant. Be it known to you all, that though the Scripture aboundeth with promises of blessings, spiritual, temporal and eternal; yet there is a condition put in, you must pray for them, you must seek unto God for them. I grant that God doth give to wicked men many mercies, (mercies in themselves, and so they will know and find when they must dearly account for them) but all the mercies which he gives to them, are to excite and draw them to himself by repentance and prayer. They cannot truly repent, but they must pray; the exercise of repentance is mainly by prayer, judging and condemning our selves before God, and pouring forth our griefs before the Lord, and easing our troubled souls by penitential confessions into his bosom, confessing our sins, that so they may be forgiven. When we call upon people to pray, and urge them to prayer, we call them to repentance and a godly life. This then makes for the honour and interest of prayer, (regeneration and reconciliation pre-  
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supposed) the promises of mercy, and the blessings and good things of the Kingdom concerning this life and hereafter, are limited with this proviso or condition, not unless we pray and call upon God: no prayer, no blessing of God, no saving-mercy from the Lord. God as a common father and bountiful provider to all the world, doth hear the Ravens when they cry, and feeds the hungry Lions, which roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God. And so he hears wicked men in their distress, and grants them many good things in answer to their prayers; but they are not to rest in their carnal prayers, nor content themselves with common mercies, these are given them to provoke them to repentance, and the love of God, and that they might be most instant with God by prayer for everlasting mercies. And though God hath not absolutely promised to hear the prayer of an unregenerate soul, so as to grant him saving grace and pardon of sin, yet he hath given ground and encouragement to pray, and there is a kind of half promise; it may be God will be gracious to you, and grant you mercy, you have encouragement to seek him. The matter shall not fail on Gods side; do you your best, and mark the issue. As therefore you would have mercies for soul and for body, for you and for yours, pray and call upon God, and make prayer a main part of your work and business in this world. *In every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving,*  
*let*

*let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts through Christ Jesus, Phil. 4. 6, 7.* Think nothing too great or too small, too hard or too easie to request and beg of God: acquaint him with all your matters, and implore his help and grace in every thing. Cease your praying, and God will cease his blessing. As prayer stops, Gods mercy to our souls stops.

*A. 5.* A fifth reason to prove that prayer is a most excellent and weighty duty may be this, it is a talking to the divine Majesty, the holy and reverent communion of sinful dust and ashes with the great and glorious God, and a treating with him about matters of the greatest moment in the world. O how little do souls consider, what it is to offer up requests to him that is devouring fire, and everlasting burnings! to have communion with the infinite Majesty of heaven, to take his holy name into our mouths! You would count it a great and famous sight to see a King and all his Nobles in all their pomp, or two Armies fighting together, or any of the brave fights of this world; what are these towards the sight of a praying soul? Come, see a man speaking to God, and God communicating of his grace and help to him. Come, see a soul worshipping the Lord of Heaven and Earth, wrestling and contending with the Almighty, pouring out his soul to God for himself and others, for everlasting life and the salvation of soul and body. O what a work is this!



O what need is there of the help of God! who knows how to pray to God further than God shall teach and enable him! The poor Publican durst not so much as *lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner*, Luk. 18. 13. *Abraham* confesses himself to be but dust and ashes, and craves favour, and entreats the Lord not to be angry for his boldness in interceding for *Sodom*. *Jacob* confesses in prayer, *I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies of God*. O what worms are we to speak to so holy and glorious a God! sinful defiled creatures not fit to have any thing at all to do with so great and pure a God! And thence are those expressions of holy men of old: *Wo is me for I am a man of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King the Lord of Hosts*, Isa. 6. 5. And *Job* 42. 5, 6, *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee, wherefore I repent and abhor my self in dust and ashes*. If *Moses* was so loath to go to *Pharaoh* an earthly King, because he thought himself not eloquent enough, and to be of a slow and stammering tongue, *Exod.* 4. 10. how much more unmeet is *Moses* himself, and much more we, to go into the presence of God, and pour forth prayers and speeches to the glorious King of Heaven? Three things be imported in this work of prayer, as it is a holy communication with God, and speaking to the divine Majesty.

1. That it is high and honourable.

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2. Rich

2. Rich and precious.

3. Hard and difficult.

1. That it is high and honourable; what greater glory can we have, than as Children to have the spirit of Adoption put into our souls, and have God for our heavenly Father, and have leave and freedom to come with boldness into his presence, and treat with him for all things we need. *Hebr. 4. ult.* And therefore the Scripture expresseth it by such apt words of drawing nigh to God. *Abraham* is said to draw nigh to God when he interceded for *Sodom*, *Gen. 18. 23.* *It is good for me to draw nigh to God*, *Psal. 73. 28.* And so the phrase of seeking Gods face is frequent and familiar in Scripture, which is an high and great word; not that God hath any face, but his face is said to be towards us when he is gracious and favourable to us. *I have seen God face to face*, saith *Jacob*, *and my life is preserved*, *Gen. 32. 30.* O the exceeding dignity and glory of a child of God in this, that he hath the spirit of Adoption, the spirit of grace and supplications! that he may go with boldness into his Fathers presence, that he may make known all his wants to him, that he may wait upon, and be so nigh to, and have such holy and humble reverent Communion with the Lord!

2. It is rich and precious. Prayer is a soul-enriching duty. The Lord is working his Grace into our souls, while we are working our hearts towards him by prayer; he slides by his Grace  
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into the praying-soul; he fills us as with marrow and fatness. O what riches of knowledg and wisdom, of joy and comfort, of peace and assurance, of heavenly treasure, doth the Lord fill the souls of his Children with in prayer. *Open thy mouth wide, saith the Lord, and I will fill thee*, Psal. 81.

10. Ask and ye shall have, ask and have, grace and glory, wisdom and knowledg, *all good things will I give to them which pray and walk uprightly*, Psal. 84.

11. *If any man lack wisdom, let him beg it of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not*, Jam. 1. 5.

He is a liberal bountifull God, he is able to do for us far more exceeding abundantly than we can ask or think. O what mercies and blessings hath prayer procured from God.

*Vincit invincibilem, ligat omnipotentem*. Luther.

Praying-souls are mostly the most rich abounding souls, they lye near the well-head, they see most into the inside part of Religion; there is more of God and the Spirit upon them usually, than upon others. When *Moses* came forth of the Mount with God, his face did shine; when we have been in the Mount with God by prayer, how often do we shine with spiritual glory? what riches of grace and peace, and assurance, and joy, do we return laden with?

3. It doth import, that it is a hard and difficult duty. Men may give us forms and words to use, but they cannot give us the spirit of Grace and supplications; they cannot create in us spiritual sighs and groans: *Rom. 8. 26, 27, The spi-*

rit helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what to pray for as we ought, but the spirit it self maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered; and he that searcheth the heart, knoweth what is the mind of the spirit, because he maketh intercession for us according to the will of God. We all agree, that without the special help of Gods Spirit we can do no spiritual work. But what if I say, that in this duty of Prayer, the Spirit of God doth put forth some special aid and assistance to the Saints above what he doth in other duties. For here it is said, *that the spirit maketh intercession for us with groans unutterable.* Christ is our Intercessor to God, and the Spirit cannot be said to be our Intercessor in the sense that Christ is; but that same principle or habit of Prayer which the Spirit of God doth put into the Saints, is a principle of Intercession, and doth in a sort naturalize the work of Prayer to the soul, and doth remove obstructions, and doth draw forth desires and breathings after God, and helps the soul with groans and sighs, when it is able to do no more. The Spirit doth intercede in us by a kind of continual restless motion and importunity towards God. We could do nothing in Prayer without the special help of Gods Spirit. There is more in Prayer than the bare work of man, or humane industry. God works in us to pray. He kindleth desires in us; he bringeth matter to our minds, he teacheth the soul both matter and method, not without the use of our reason and under-

understandings, but in a way most congruous to the new nature in a Saint ; so that it is sweet to him, and very natural to pray when the Lord is with him ; and when the Spirit of the Lord is from him he can do nothing ; Prayer sticks in his mouth like choak-cheese, he hath neither matter nor method in Prayer ; he may speak words, but very deadly, confusedly and weakly, and many times not words themselves. *As a crane or a swallow so did I chatter*, Isa. 38. 14. All this lets us see, that Prayer is a most eminent and weighty duty.

R. 6. Another reason to prove it, shall be that of the Apostle, *Eph. 6. 18.* where reckoning up the several pieces of the Armor of God, and counselling Christians to put on the whole Armor of God, he names Prayer for one ; and not only that, but he brings Prayer in the end of all, and forbears to give it any armor-name or appellation as he had done the rest ; teaching us thereby that without Prayer all the other pieces of our armor will be useless, and the main use of all the other pieces is in Prayer. *Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all Saints.* Without Prayer you are naked unarmed men, going to fight against many and mighty enemies, fierce and implacable, that lie in wait for you and will be sure to be too hard for you, except you have the help and grace of God by prayer ; this is the way by

which we must overcome the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, spiritual enemies, principalities and powers, even by prayers and tears, by supplications and crys to God ; prevail with God, and you prevail with all. He hath Satan in chains, he hath your lusts and corruptions under command, he hath all power and dominion ; the creature can do you no hurt without the leave and permission of God ; nor can temptations prevail against us ; Prayer is our armor and weapons against all opposition, both defensive and offensive.

1. It is defensive. By prayer we do best defend our selves against assaults ; when a temptation comes in our way, when sin appears and threatens us, prayer is an excellent means of defence ; the child runs into the mothers arms at the sight of any frightful thing ; when thou art threatned by the world, when Satan sets upon thee by his wiles and temptations, when he would draw thee to any sin of omission or commission, the way to defend thy soul, is to cry to God by inward heart-crys, and by all manner of prayer and supplications. Thus did *Paul* when he had a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan sent to buffet him, he pray'd three times to God, and God gave him a gracious answer, *My grace shall be sufficient for thee*, 2 Cor. 12. 7, 8, 9. *For my love they are my adversaries, but I give my self unto prayer*, Psal. 109. 4. Let them curse, let them lie in wait for me, let them seek my ruin, I will give



give my self unto prayer; let them be never so malicious and implacably bent against me, *evening and morning, and at noon will I pray and cry aloud*; this is the defence I make against mine enemies. If God be for us, who shall be against us? If we can engage the Lord by prayer, we are safe; our souls may be safe, when our bodies be in the enemies hands.

2. Prayer is offensive also. By this we vanquish the Devil, by this we overcome the world, by this our lusts are weakned, by this we become Conquerours. It is our lusts which are our chiefest enemies within us, and the Devil without us, the roaring Lion. Now every right prayer is as a wound stuck into Satans side, as an arrow shot into his heart. It wounds our sins, and that which wounds sin wounds Satan; for as it is said of the adversaries of the Jews, *Nebem. 2. 10, When they heard of Nehemiahs coming to Jerusalem, it grieved them exceedingly that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel.* So it grieves Satan when he sees any one seeking the welfare of his soul, calling upon God, crying to him to help him against Satan, to have mercy and compassion upon his soul: Satan grieves at it, he frets and rages; and as we read of King *Saul*, when he saw that God was with *David*, *he eyed him from that time forth, 1 Sam. 10. 9.* So doth Satan by a praying-soul, when he sees him go alone and seek a corner to pray in, when he observes him to give himself to prayer, he

eyes him from that time forth; he then rages, he is aware of it, he sets upon the praying-soul with floods of temptations and discouragements, he doth haunt him, and vex him, and doth all he can to deaden his heart, to alter his mind, to make him cease praying, to hearken to sects and parties, and turn into by-paths, or to be proud and greatly-conceited of his prayers, and so turn them into poyson, and blow him up with hypocrisie and pride. Satan, my Brethren, is the great enemy of Prayer, because Prayer is the great enemy of Satan and his Kingdom. When we go without Prayer, then he hath us at a vantage; then we are a fair game for him, a thousand to one but he catcheth us in some of his snares. When the hands of *Moses* be up in prayer, *Israel* prevails; when his hands are down, *Amalek* prevails, *Exod.* 17. 11. This *Amalek* is Satan, this bewitching world, bosom-lusts, and secref corruptions, deadly mortal enemies, that will never be conquered but by faith and prayer.

R. 7. Another reason to prove that Prayer is a most weighty duty, is Gods signal and manifest owning of Prayer, giving such countenance to it, granting wonderful things at the request of his Saints. The prayer of one *Abraham* had well nigh prevail'd for the safety of five Cities, with all the Villages and Inhabitants thereof; at first he insisted but upon fifty, then he came down to fourty-five, then to forty, then to thirty, then to twenty, and last of all to ten; all this while the

the Lord yielded to his prayer. So long as *Abraham* prayed, the Lord granted his request. *Abraham* stopt his prayer before the Lord ceased to grant his request. Had he come down lower to six or four, or fewer, we know not what the Lord might have done, *Gen.* 18. 23, &c. When the Lord overthrew *Sodom*, he remembred *Lot*, and spared him for *Abraham's* sake, and in remembrance of his prayer, *Gen.* 19. 29. And at the request and single prayer of *Lot*, the Lord spared one of the five Cities, namely *Zoar*. Faith and Prayer have done wonders, *Heb.* 11, we read what famous things are said of faith. O what rare things have been done by faith ! you must there couple faith and prayer : The Seas have been dryed, the Sun hath stood still, the dead have been raised, the clouds have been stopt, the windows of heaven have been opened, judgments have been prevented, stayed, and removed ; Mercies obtained, Kingdoms saved and destroyed, Devils have been cast forth, most rare and wonderful things have been done, it is not possible to recite the thousand part of the memorable fruits and successes of prayer. When all other helps have fail'd, when means and instruments, and second causes have stood looking on, and given up the matter for gone, Faith and Prayer have prevail'd with God, and wrought wonderful things. I doubt not but that all experienced Christians are able to make a book of their Prayers, the success and return of them. *Moses* by prayer overthrew *Amalek* ; how often did he prevail

prevail with God for the sparing of *Israel*, and he and *Aaron* stand in the gap and make up the breach? *Let me alone, saith the Lord to Moses, that I may destroy this people; let me alone;* as though *Moses* by his prayer had with-held the Lord, and bound up his hands, *Exod. 32. 10.* By prayer the Church prevail'd with God for the rescue and deliverance of *Peter*, *Act. 12. 9.* By prayer *Hannah* obtained a child, a gracious Son from the Lord, *1 Sam. 1.* By prayer *Elias* opened and shut the Clouds: *He prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit, Jam. 5. 17, 18, And he was a man subject to like passions as we are.* The prayers of the meanest Saint are of great price with God. *Ecclesia*, saith *Luther*, *totum mundum convertit sanguine & oratione.* Faith and Prayer will do more with God than all other means without them. If there were no more but this, it were enough to our confirmation of the excellency and utility of Prayer. A child of God hath a high esteem of Prayer, because he hath found so great good by it, and God hath granted him such returns of Prayer as have astonished him, and rejoiced him, and done very much to confirm and radicate his belief of the whole Christian Faith, and of many weighty points in Religion, and to assure him of Gods favour and love to his soul, and of his interest in God; though

we may not make the bare returns of prayer our only or principal work of grace, and rule to try our state by ; internal grace, or habitual holiness, and a godly life are our chief rule in that ; but the successes and returns of prayer do second this, and do very much confirm our hope, and render our case far more probable and comfortable.

There are some other Reasons which I might have added, but time will not give way. As,

8. The very great and apparent difference between right praying-souls, and those which pray not.

9. The sense which all dying people have of prayer; and when people be in misery and extremity, O how urgent are they for prayer then, and night and day their hands and eyes be lift up to God ; and while they can speak, prayer is in their mouths, and often times the Saints and others die praying.

10. Lastly, The practice and consent of all mankind, and of all Sects and Religions, and the very dictates of Nature ; Nature it self teacheth to pray ; all Religions in the world do take in Prayer as one prime part ; and the Scripture doth often put it for all Religion, as *whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved* ; but that is, because Prayer is an eminent part of Religion, and is contained in it as an essential piece.

So much for Explication and Confirmation.

1. Hence we may gather and be informed of the sad and uncomfortable state of all unregenerate people, being void of the spirit of grace and supplications; how shall those pray and speak to God who are dead in trespasses and sins? O who would be without a God to call upon, and have recourse unto? and what is God to me if I have no life or spirit in me wherewith to seek him, and apply my self to him? as what is a thirsty man better if he have no water at all to drink? and what is he better though there be a fountain of water by him, and he have nothing wherewith to draw? so is the case of all wicked men. There is a God to be sought unto, a God that heareth prayer, a God of mercy and salvation, able to save to the uttermost all those that come unto him by Jesus Christ; but ungodly men are without Christ, and their prayer being a Christless, graceless prayer, is not accepted with God, as are the prayers of a gracious soul. I would not discourage you from prayer. There is indeed a great difference between some unregenerate men and other some; there are resolved and returning sinners.

1. Resolved sinners, continuing in their wickedness, which are utterly far off from Christ, which have no sense of God upon their souls, nor any smitings and convictions of Conscience, or preparations towards a change; the prayers of these people are far from being accepted with God, are gross mockery.

2. There



2. There are returning sinners, which are a making and a framing towards Christ and a holy life; they have some illumination and conviction upon their Consciences of their sin and guilt, and have some desires after God, and do put forth themselves in endeavours; and partly lye at the Pool-side waiting for the moving of the water, when the good hour of their salvation will come, and the spirit of the Lord will breathe spiritual life into their souls. These are not quite new-born, there is a striving to come forth of the womb, but yet they stick in the birth, and there is danger and great fear what the issue may prove. Now the prayers of these people, though they are much more accepted with God than the prayers of the former sort, yet are they not accepted with God so as are the prayers of converted and truly sincere Saints. And we do not, we would not discourage any such beginners from prayer; but we give them to understand this, that till they be in Christ, and are sincerely resolved upon the way of holiness, their prayers though they be not vain and useles, yet are they not to be accounted sincere and godly prayers; there wants a grain or two more to make them currant weight. As suppose a man be bound in a Bond to pay twenty pounds, and he offers all the whole sum save twelve-pence, let all the rest of the money be never so good and currant, the want of this one twelve-pence is a forfeiture of the whole; so let peoples prayers be what they will, if they  
come

come not from a regenerate heart, from a sanctified root and principle in a new-born soul, they are not currant prayers with God. If we stick and rest in them, we are never like to see the Kingdom of God. And therefore I say, the case of all the un sanctified is very sad. O what godly man is there in all the world that would be without a God and Saviour to pray unto, and to hear his poor prayers and requests at all times? O misery, to have our prayers thrown in our faces as dung, and the cry of our sins to out-cry the cry of our prayers!

2. This lets us see what cause we have to lament that there are so many prayerless persons and Families up and down; so little prayer. O how much is prayer wanting among us all! O how little of prayer is there in our Congregations! Indeed there is praying in many Congregations, but it is rather a mocking of God, most vile hypocrisie; so often as the publick Prayers are read and repeated by the Minister and people, so often the name of God is taken in vain exceedingly by many hypocritical Ministers and people, which seem most devout at their prayers, and there is little piety, sobriety, and charity to be seen in their lives. Gods house is called a house of prayer, but it is turned by many into a house of hypocrisie and customary repeating of words; and bodily service and lip-labour is the main and substance of all they do to God in prayer, and so it is in many Closets and Families. Multitudes  
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there are which live in the total gross neglect and omission of prayer; profane persons and families which do not call upon God. This is matter of lamentation, to go through Towns and Parishes and find so many prayerless families and persons; husbands and wives prayerless, children and servants, all dead and dumb souls, gross neglecters of prayer. Let these people consider,

1. This doth argue that these persons are Atheists in their hearts, and do not believe that there is any God at all; or that the true God is but some Idol, which is all one as to deny him. They make gold their god, and relie upon an arm of flesh, and declare by their prayerless life that they have no true belief of God, nor put any holy trust and confidence in him; for that is our God which we seek unto, and make our refuge in all conditions. Wicked men either do not seek unto God at all, or else if they do, it is but in complement, not in sincerity, and with the full desire of their hearts, they will not part with their Idols; if they seek unto God, they will yet retain their sins, they are practically Atheists. *Job 21. 14, 15, They say unto God, depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy laws. What is the Almighty that we should serve him? and what profit is there if we call upon his name?*

2. This proves that men are exceedingly fallen from God. O what wickedness and degeneracy is man fallen into, when he will not call upon God  
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nor worship his maker, nor honour him by invocation and prayer? And therefore the Scripture joyns them with Heathens, *Jer. 10. ult. Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and the families which have not called upon thy name.* Nay in this they are worse a great deal than heathens; for the worshippers of false gods do sacrifice and pray to them. We read in Scripture of the worshippers of *Baal* how they cut and lanced themselves, and cried from morning to noon, *O Baal* hear us. The *Turks* are much in blind prayer. *Papists* abound with superstitious prayers, but multitudes among us seldom or never call upon God. This doth argue the great corruption of our natures. O how exceedingly is man degenerate and fallen from God, when he accounts it his shame and his burden to call upon God, and had rather be sinning than praying.

3. This doth argue that souls are ignorant of their sin and danger, and the misery they are in. O how could they lye down to sleep without prayer, if they did but know what they have within them, and what danger they are in. When *Jonah* lay asleep in the bottom of the Ship, and the Mariners at their wits end for fear of their Lives and the Ship, they all fell a praying each one to his god, and awaken *Jonah*, *Awake O sleeper, what meanest thou to sleep? call upon thy God, that we perish not, Jon. 1. 6.* O dead souls, which do not call upon God; they are fast asleep in the chains of Satan, they are not sensible what  
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a case they are in. All their sins lye upon them unpardoned, and their hearts within are full of noisom lusts, worse a thousandfold than if so many Toads and Serpents were within them, and round about them; and they are each moment liable to eternal damnation; and yet they are secure, and have never a serious word that they can utter to God by way of prayer. O lifeless souls! doth not this argue you to be secure and impenitent? O how could you live without prayer, if you had but an inward feeling what an evil sin is, how precious the soul is, how holy, dreadful, and almighty God is, how great a matter the power of godliness is, and what a condition every impenitent graceless soul is in? O how would you cry with all your might, Lord, save me, or I perish? How would your heart compel you to go to God by prayer, and pour forth your complaints to him? you would be constant and fervent in prayer.

4. This also doth argue prayerless people to be very proud. He is a proud Beggar that will not ask an Alms. He is a proud Sinner, that will not be beholding to God for his Mercy, that will not go down upon his knees, and pray to God for the Salvation of his Soul; that thinks Heaven is not worth praying for; and forgiveness of sin, and spiritual everlasting mercies, not worth praying for. O wretched pride in Mans heart, that will not be beholding to God for his chiefest mercies and blessings! that thinks it too much to beg them, he would have them without asking. Ah! he thinks

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asking with the lips, and unasking with the heart will suffice. If people were but humble, how frequent and fervent would they be in prayer. If they were but sensible what odious Creatures they are in the sight of God, and what punishments they deserve for all their sins, they would think themselves unworthy of the smallest mercy. They would beg from God their daily bread, and beg from him every thing they want, and most of all spiritual good things for their souls; but they are damnably proud, Psal. 10. 4, *The wicked through the pride of his heart will not seek after God.* It is the pride of their hearts that makes them averse to prayer, and to be so in love with formal, hypocritical, lifeless prayer. They have unhumbled and unbroken hearts; their consciences are not smitten for sin, they see not what wickedness is in them, and what loads of iniquity be upon them, and what need they have of Christ, and his redeeming and cleansing blood; they are proud in spirit, and are loth to stoop to the Commands of God; & they reproach & vilify praying Saints and people, & speak evilly of them.

5. This argues them to be far from salvation, and from the mercy of God, and the blessings of his Covenant, Rom. 10. 13, *Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved.* And 2 Chron. 15. 2, *The Lord is with you while you be with him; and if you seek him, he will be found of you; but if you forsake him, he will forsake you.* And v. 4, *When they in their trouble did turn unto the Lord God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them.* Isa. 55. 6, 7,

*Seek*



*Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* Here calling upon God, repentance, and turning to God, go all together; and the mercy, and pardon, and salvation of God, go along with them. And *Peter* saith to *Simon Magus*, *Repent of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee,* Acts 8. 22. Those therefore that do not pray and call upon God, the mercy and salvation of God is far from them. I may say of these people, that the curse of the Lord is upon them, and the curse of the Lord is in their dwellings. O they are much to be pitied which live without prayer, that have a God to call upon, and they live without God in the world; that have a soul in continual danger of perishing, and will not open their mouths to God by prayer to save them; that are in the jaws of the Devil, and will not pray to God to save and deliver them; that have a thousand thousand damning sins upon their souls, and a thousand worldly lusts dwelling in them as ill as so many Devils, and they lye down with these, and rise up with these, and go in and out with these, and never call upon God. *Jesus Christ* hath dyed for them, and hath prayed for them with strong crying and tears, and these wretched creatures will not pray for themselves. Ministers pray for them, and fast, and weep, and mourn for them, and they will not open their mouths to

God for their own souls. Heaven and Earth call upon them to cry to their God, to seek the Lord while he may be found, and they will not be gotten to this work of prayer. O what do these Creatures mean? do they believe that ever they must die? will they not pray then, and cry to God then? do they believe they must ever come before the judgment-seat of God, and will they be as dumb then as they are now, when they shall cry to the rocks and mountains to hide them from the wrath of God, and from the indignation of the Lamb? O if praying would profit wicked people then, would there not be crying forth to God and Jesus Christ by all the condemned wicked world, O merciful Judge have mercy upon us, O spare us, and do not pass sentence upon us; we be all wretched forlorn creatures, O let us live a while longer in the world, try us a little more time, and we will pray and fear God, and lead new lives, and do all that the Lord commands us. But all in vain then, too late, too late to pray then.

6. Lastly, this doth argue that people are little acquainted with the nature of Religion; that man must needs be a gross ignorant soul in the knowledg and Religion of Jesus Christ, that doth not call upon God, and hold communion with him by prayer. For if prayer be so excellent, such a prime essential part of Religion, practised by Christ and all his Saints, and a principal part of a Christians work in this world is to pray; Jesus Christ

Christ prescribing us a rule and platform of prayer, yea and to be used by all godly minds as a prayer it self according as Gods good spirit shall direct, and the circumstances of duty shall make it expedient; then let persons pretend what they will to knowledg and learning, and gifts, if they be not praying people, and have not the very spirit of grace and supplications, all their learning is but ignorance, and all their gifts and attainments are but like a jewel in a swines snout. It is not praying with or without a Book, which is that which the Scripture calls *the spirit of grace and supplications*. Praying by a form and without a form have their particular conveniencies and inconveniencies; and a gracious man may pray with the spirit either way, and a graceless man prays without the spirit either way. But such is the excellency and necessity of prayer, that grace cannot live in the soul without it; it is as the breath of grace and the new creature; that knowledg which is not joined and accompanied with godly prayer, is lifeless knowledg; and I may say of it as Christ saith of the light, *the light within thee is darkness*; so thy knowledg which is prayerless, is ignorance, and thy Faith is dead Faith, and thy Religion is atheism and impiety, and thou art no true servant of God; thou art yet a stranger to the life of Christ, and knowest not God nor thy self, and thine own heart. True Prayer doth exercise all grace, it exerciseth Faith and Repentance, it exerciseth Hope and Charity,

it exerciseth hunger and desires after heavenly things, it exerciseth godly sorrow, and joy, and zeal; it exerciseth thankfulness, and praise, and self-denial and resolution, and there can be no saving Religion without it. We are all needy and most feeble Creatures, and stand in need of continual mercies from the Lord, and God will have us to be sensible of our own wants, and to come to God by prayer for the supply of them, as children to a father, that he may have glory and praise from us by such acknowledgments and dependance, and supplications, and that we may have communion with him, and partake of his image and glory upon our souls.

*Use 2.*

For Exhortation to Sinners out of Christ, and yet in your sins; you are most to be pitied, and compassion binds us to study and labour most for you; how shall we do to make you praying people? we would be glad to see you among the Saints upon your knees, or hear of you in your Closets and Families busily calling upon God. O a blessed thing to come into a Family where they be all worshippers of the Lord by holy prayer. Husband in one room by himself, and the Wife in another by her self calling upon God, Children and servants by themselves weeping and praying in a corner, and wrestling with God for everlasting mercies, and all devoutly joining together

gether in Morning and Evening Family-worship. If you ask what course must we take to come to this, there is but one way, and that is by Regeneration and Conversion. This is the first foundation of a godly life; till you be this, your prayers have more sin in them than righteousness, more hypocrisie than sincerity; and God doth more hate them, than he loves them. This is all the Direction, I shall give for the present. I shall here take in the next Doctrine, and the handling and observation of that will be for Direction to you how to obtain Regeneration, and that is by fervent praying.

Doct. 2. *It is not enough for Christian people to pray, but they must pray and cry aloud, that is, they must pray fervently, ardently, and with all the might and intention of the soul.* This crying aloud is not so much with the voice outwardly, as with the soul inwardly. Fervency in Prayer springs from faith and a renewed heart, and implanted grace in the soul. It imports,

1. A thirsting desire after the favour of God, and grace, and pardon, and spiritual everlasting mercies; very vehement and strong desires, as the Hart panteth after the water-brooks, or like the desires of a sick man after health, or of a woman in travel longing to be delivered.

2. Fervency and crying to God by Prayer doth contain a great sense and feeling of our spiritual wants, and of our helpless and lost state without the grace of Christ, and the Communion of the

Holy Ghost, and thereupon a crying forth to God like a drowning man ready to sink, Lord save me or I perish; or like a prisoner condemned to die, begs for his life, O I am an undone man, pardon me, and spare me this time, and I will do so no more. It is hunger and extream need which doth cause us to cry to God. As when the beggar is hungry and cold, pinched for want of provision, he cannot contain, but he breaks forth into importunity, and crys, Good people for Gods sake relieve me.

3. This crying to God in Prayer, doth contain a pouring forth of the soul before God; *Psal. 102. title, A Prayer of the afflicted when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the Lord.* So it is said of gracious *Hannah, 1 Sam. 1. 15, 16, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit, and from the abundance of my complaint and grief have poured out my soul to God.* As if a man should turn a vessel upside down, he leaves nothing within, but all goes out; so to cry aloud, to be vehement in Prayer, is to gather in all the thoughts and affections of the soul, and pour out our whole complaint to him, and leave all our matters with the Lord.

4. To cry aloud, is to stretch and strain the whole man in Prayer to God, using and tempering the voice so as may quicken us in the duty, and be no distraction to us, but a furtherance; and where it is free for us to use our voice.

5. A wicked unregenerate man may cry aloud  
with



with his voice, and make a seeming noise and fervour, and yet it may be but a carnal fervour, coming from the flesh, and from a pang of fear and terrour, or from no other well-head than nature and common grace, without an inward change upon the soul; and a gracious man may make little noise, or seeming fervour, but silently worship God, and speak to God so as none may hear but himself, and yet be most fervent in prayer, as that gracious woman *Hannah*, her lips moved, but her voice was not heard when she prayed, and yet she poured out her soul before God, and was most devout and fervent in prayer. That is not always a fervent prayer which is set off with a loud voice, but that which cometh from an enlightned understanding, from a pure heart, filled with the love of God, and boiling with heavenly zeal, engaging the whole man in the duty. We must not judg of a Prayer by the meer outside of it, though it is true, we may have a great guess by the out-side what kind of prayer it is; there is usually a manifest difference between the seeming voice and fervour of an hypocrite, and the sober judicious and heavenly fervour of a gracious soul; but yet the root and ground of the difference is within.

6. Lastly, the fervour of a gracious soul in prayer is accompanied with all other gracious qualities, and is never alone, but as it cometh from a renewed heart, so it produceth obedience and a godly life; and therefore we find them  
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coupled together, *fervent in spirit, serving the Lord*, Rom. 12. 11. but carnal hypocritical fervour can produce no more but a carnal hypocritical worldly life; it doth not mortifie sin: for all his balling and noise, and seeming fervour in prayer he is worldly and fleshly at the heart, he is not cut off from his sin, nor doth he lead a godly life.

*Q. What Reasons are there for fervency in prayer?* I shall name these few.

R. 1. God is a spirit, and unless we worship him in spirit, he will not be pleased, *Joh. 4. 24.* he requires that we serve him with all the heart, and soul, and strength, that we pray to him with the whole man; bodily service may be accepted of men; if we obey mens laws outwardly, they have no more to do, they are no judg of our hearts, nor can they punish heart-vices; but God is a spirit, and he requires the spirit in every performance, and nothing but life and spirit, and zeal, and fervency in all our duties, and services, will please him; *Mal. 1. ult. Cursed be the deceiver which hath a male in his flock, and voweth and sacrificeth unto God a corrupt thing.*

R. 2. As it will not please God, so neither will it profit us. Coldness in prayer will not kill our lusts, it will not cast out Satan, it will not warm our hearts, it will but starve our own Souls and those that joyn with us; when you pray coldly and deadly without life and spirit, you find and feel little profit by it, and others that joyn with  
you

you fall asleep. Satan will not be overcome with cold praying, Heaven will not be won with faint asking; when *Moses* hands were heavy in prayer, and hung down, *Amalek* prevail'd. When we let down the fervour and intention of our Souls in prayer, the Devil prevails, our lusts are too hard for us. If we prevail against them, it must be by fervent praying, wrestling with God as did *Jacob*, and taking the Kingdom of heaven by violence.

R. 3. The want of fervency in prayer, argues wavering, hypocrisie, and double-mindedness: and you know what the Scripture saith, *Jam.* 1. 6, 7, 8. *He that asketh, must ask in faith, nothing wavering, he that wavereth is like a wave of the Sea tossed to and fro. Let not that man think that he shall receive anything from the Lord: He calls him a double minded man, unstable in all his wayes.* Coldness and deadness in prayer argues a distracted divided mind; the heart is divided from the Lord, there is something which carries away the heart from God. The heart is weak in prayer, it is not fervent, it is not spiritual, it doth not labour in prayer, because it is carried away by contrary lusts. These do make us cold and wavering, we are indifferent whether God hear us or no, we are loath that God should take us at our word, and afraid lest he slay our sins, and grant us our petitions. As *Augustine* mentions of himself before his conversion, *He prayed to God to give him chastity and continency, but not yet.* So many a man prays  
against

against his sins, but he unprays it with his heart; he prays for grace, but he would not have it yet. This is hypocrisie, and hypocritical praying; there wanteth sincerity and fervency in the prayer, it comes from a double heart, a heart divided between Heaven and the World, Christ and *Belial*, so far the Lord rejects and abhors it.

R. 4. Fervency is requir'd in prayer, to teach us the worth of the mercies we beg from God: if they could be had for nothing, we should despise them; things that are easily obtain'd, we set light by them, lightly come, lightly go; that which is hardly obtain'd, we shall be apt to prize and be choice of. A godly mind is very chary, and tender of his graces and comforts, and peace and communion with God, because they have cost him dear, many a tough prayer, many a painful duty, many a sigh, and many a fervent and strong crying to God. If grace and salvation might be had for meer asking, and begging, people would despise it, it would be as common as dirt in the high-way. But the Lord will have us to know, that it is not all begging and praying that will suffice, but begging and praying to purpose, like a man that is begging for his life, earnest and vehement, with all his might.

R. 5. Lastly, we must needs be conformed to Jesus Christ our head, and to all his Saints. Now our blessed Lord he prayed fervently, he prayed so as never man did; he was in an agony: he prayed so that an Angel from heaven was sent to strengthen

strengthen him. He prayed with strong crying and tears, and sweat thick drops of blood for us; and shall not we pray fervently for our selves? *Jacob* wept and prayed, and wrestled with the Lord. *Paul* was so earnest in prayer, that he fell into a trance; wherever there is true grace in the soul (except it be in a disease or weakness) it makes a Saint to pray with might and fervour. You see good reason for the point.

### U S E.

The Use hereof may be for reproof of us all: we all come under reproof for our coldness and deadness in prayer; there is more praying than there is fervent and powerful praying; there is much detestable hypocrisie and coldness committed by us in our solemn prayers to God, both in secret, in private, and in publique. Those which use forms, and those which use none, both are reprovabale for lukewarmness and neutrality in prayer.

Consider, 1. That this coldness in prayer is a great sin, and if you be consciencious people, you must needs be pricked at the heart for it. I say, it is not only a sin, but it is a great sin to speak unto the Holy God about so great a matter as everlasting life, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, deadily and heartlesly, as if we matter'd not whether God heard us or no. What is this but to mock the Almighty God, and to sport with consuming fire, and dally and play with everlasting Tor-

Torments, and be in jest, and complement about Heaven and Hell, and make a light matter of sin and eternity? What is this but a profaning of Gods name, and a going to Hell upon our knees, and a provoking of God to deny us those mercies which we so faintly beg? If we have a mind of the mercies we beg, why are we not in good earnest? Why do we pray like canting beggars, like dreamers and sleepers? If we have no mind at all of the mercies, why do we take upon us to pray at all? How can we once open our mouths to God, and not be in earnest? how can we go into the presence of one so dreadful, and so holy, and heart-searching, and all-seeing about the salvation or damnation of our own souls and others, everlastingly, and not be in earnest? is not this a great sin?

2. Let me further argue with you concerning this matter : Either you are gracious Christians, or you are not, either you are pardoned all your sins, and be the children of God, and heirs of glory, and be in a condition to die, or else you be children of death and hell, and slaves of Satan, and lie under the wrath of God, and all your sins lye upon you unpardoned.

1. Suppose the first, suppose the best, that you be the true children of God, and your sins pardoned, and your souls reconciled to God, is it for you to pray coldly, and deadly, and lukewarmly? what then shall wicked men do? if you that have life pray like dead men, what shall those  
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those do that are stark dead, and have no spiritual life of grace in them at all? if you that have the spirit of grace and supplications, and are assisted by the powerful influence of divine and special grace do but complement with God, and pray as if you were asleep: What do you think shall become of those which have not that spirit which you have, nor your helps and assistances? What hath God converted you for, and pardoned your sins for, and planted his graces in you for, and made you living souls for? that you might serve him coldly, and pray to him hypocritically, and complement with consuming fire? a great part of a Christians work in this world is praying; and if you loiter instead of working, and turn so excellent and necessary a duty into hypocrisie and imagery, and death and coldness; how doth this answer to your holy profession, and coming into the Lords Vineyard to do him faithful service, and not to loiter, and be idle, and play the truant? O loitering souls, unprofitable and unfruitful servants, all of us to our heavenly Master! let us be ashamed of our doings, and mend our prayers, lest God spue them out of his mouth.

2. But then suppose the other, that you are impenitent, that you are heirs of hell and damnation, and slaves of Satan, and lie under the guilt of all your sins, and are every moment at the point of perishing; O how can you be cold in prayer, who should rather be off your wits, and cry out as *Mordecai* in the midst of the street,

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with an exceeding loud and bitter cry, *Esth.* 4. 1. And as poor *Carnal Esau* cryed to his Father with an exceeding great and bitter cry, *Bless me, even me also, O my father*, *Gen.* 27. 34. Suppose you were to be taken to a Gallows just now, and be hang'd, and news should be brought you that the King will come to see you hang'd, and there is hope he may pardon you if you be instant with him, and beg hard for your life, would you not pray and cry for your life? Suppose all you have, lay at stake, and begging would save your life, and the lives of all you have, and the lives of all the people in the Land, would you not beg, and each one pray to save your self, and Wives, and Children, and Neighbours, and King and Kingdom from perishing? O that God would but open the eyes of lost souls, and make them sensible what a case they are in. O how would you pour forth your souls to God, Give me grace or I dye, give me everlasting life or I dye; Heaven, heaven, Lord, for my immortal soul; an everlasting portion for my Soul. O forgive me all my crying damning sins. O have mercy upon me, have mercy upon me for thy Christs sake. I would give ten thousand Worlds for the favour of God, and the forgiveness of sins, and Gods Image upon my soul, and his everlasting mercies. O what need have you to cry to God, who may be in Hell before morning, who have Salvation offer'd to you, and press'd upon you, and are in danger to lose it for ever, for want of a little more fervour and importunity in prayer.

3. Consider that, I beseech you what a sad thing it is to lose everlasting Salvation for want of a little more pains and striving with God by prayer. If thou perish, it will be either because thou hast not prayed at all, or because thou hast not prayed hard enough; because thou hast been cold and unconstant in prayer. If thou prevail with God, it must be by humble supplication, by penitent confession of thy sins, and instant crys to him for mercy; a little slackness, and deadness, and coldness in prayer may lose thee thy soul for ever; everlasting life lyes upon thy praying; mark it sinner, I entreat thee: *Ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you*; but then you must ask, and you must seek, and you must knock prevailingly, powerfully, fervently and boldly, as men that will have no nay: Grace, Lord, I must have, or I am undone; I can be without other things, but eternal life and everlasting mercy I can in no wise be without. Such boldness in prayer God will not reprove you for; he knows your condition better than you do; he knows you cannot be too instant with him; he knows if you could weep an ocean of tears, and fast and pray night and day, and pour out your souls to God with the greatest might, everlasting life deserves it all; he knows all is little enough to the Salvation of one precious soul. O sinners, how sad is this that you should be so fair for heaven and eternal life, and may have it for begging and craving, and will

not beg and crave hard enough! O what cheaper terms can you desire? God offers you his Son, and with him eternal life, even all saving mercies; you may have them if you will. If you want grace and ability, come to him and beg, and continue begging; pray hard enough, put fervency and importunity into your prayers, and Christ hath told you in the Parable of the unjust Judge, and the importunate Widow, what respect God beareth to importunity in Prayer, *Luk. 18. 1, &c.*

4. Lastly, consider if the damned in hell would not think themselves happy if they were but in your condition; how doth *Dives* pray to *Abraham*, *Father Abraham send one from the dead to preach to my brethren; have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame*, *Luk. 16. 24.* O how would these cursed Caitiffs pray to God for mercy and salvation if they were but in your condition, if they were but hearing this Sermon, and after it were over. Alas they may pray to all eternity, and never the nearer; too late, too late; the five foolish Virgins call and cry, *Lord, Lord, open unto us*, but all in vain; Christ answers, *Get you gone, away with you, ye are workers of iniquity, I never knew you.*

Doct. 3. *It is not enough to pray, and be fervent in prayer, but we must be frequent and constant in prayer, and do our best to observe the meekest seasons of prayer, and stated times of prayer,*  
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*in imitation of holy David, and elsewhere, and other servants of God in Scripture, as Daniel, evening and morning, and at noon with I pray, and cry aloud.*

This must be understood with some caution.

1. I do not say that it is absolutely a duty upon all persons to tie themselves to set-hours of Prayer, and to observe just these times of Morning, Evening and Noon; those that have not weightier duties to call them off, they should do it.

2. But every man is to deny himself, and take up his Cross, and be wise and vigilant for his soul, and accustom himself to holy Prayer, and make conscience all that in him lyes, never to omit one Prayer.

3. And moreover it is the wisdom and duty of every Christian to observe the meetest and fittest seasons of Prayer; and if weightier matters will give leave, to observe some stated times of Prayer, when and so often as godly wisdom shall direct; without running into superstition on the one hand, or looseness and carelessness on the other hand. These are the two rocks to be avoided:

1. Superstition on the one hand, that is a making to our selves rules and duties where God hath made none, nor would have us to make any to the hinderance of our souls, and our own greater inconvenience.

2. Carelessness is the other rock; and the more

dangerous, giving liberty to the flesh, and permitting it to be without yoke, and therefore it is good and safe to bind our selves to rules as much as conscience and necessity will give leave, still leaving it free for matters of greater weight and necessity to over-rule those which are less weighty, remembring that God will have mercy and not sacrifice, and that it is the pleasing of God, and the obeying of his Commands, which is a Christians work and business in this world.

There are many Reasons for our constancy and frequency in Prayer.

As, 1. This will be a probable argument of your sincerity, *Job 27. 10, Will the hypocrite always call upon God?* Intimating that he will not. Constancy in Prayer is a likely probable sign of a sincere heart. I do not say it is an infallible sign of sincerity, but it is a probable likely sign. I think there are but few hypocrites which keep up a constant course of Prayer, and yet I cannot say but there may be some and many.

2. Frequency and constancy in Prayer is the way to make you more skilful and experienced in Prayer, and more accustomed to it, and preventing strangeness. Seldom doing a thing, diswonts us, and makes us strange to it, and abates our love to it, and doth much hinder our thriving and profit.

3. You are constant in sinning, you daily re-ew your sins; there is not the most sincere man ut there is in him flesh as well as spirit, and the flesh



flesh doth not cease to act more or less continually; and why therefore should you not renew your confession, and prayers, and crys to God for pardoning and cleansing grace?

4. You are constant in want and necessity; take you any hour of the day, and you want something, more of God and heaven you want. If you be wicked and impenitent, then in effect you want all things; and though you be pardoned and sincere, yet have you many, and real, and great wants; we are all of us but poor in spirituals, and God knows what we may need before we come to die; and if our wants be so many, and great, and constant, is there not great reason that we should be constant in prayer for the supply of them?

5. Which of you is there that would willingly lose the benefit of one good market, or one good bargain, or one day in your hay and corn, and harvest? and why should you lose the benefit of one prayer and communion with God? this is as true and real gain to the soul, as is the other to the body, and far more.

6. You are constant in feeding and dressing, and affording sleep to the body, and providing for this, and why should you not do the like for your soul? Can your soul live without food any more than your body? must your body be exactly ordered and dieted, and have its full of meat, and drink, and sleep and two or three set-meals each day, and is not your soul worthy of

all exact care and regular spiritual diet, and whatsoever may make for its health? and that doth constancy in Prayer.

7. Did ever the right observance and performance of Prayer lose you any thing? did it ever hinder any business, or lose you any real profit? say when, and where, and how. *Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven, and the righteousness thereof, and all other things shall be added to you.* Prayer rightly done, furthers all other business. It is far from driving all a-rooks, as they say, for it knits our spirits to God, it keeps the soul in order, it warms us within, it maintains soundness and health in the inner man; he manages all his matters well that looks to his soul, and suffers no defect to grow there; let matters go how they will without, if the soul pine and famish, and grow lank and lean, and the flesh and the world encroach and gain upon us, this is very bad husbandry, all goes to rack, all such gain is loss; better all perish, than your soul die and perish.

8. God is constant in his mercies; he loads you daily with his benefits, and should not you be constant in the return of thanks and praise to him? and therefore are to be constant in prayer to him. What day comes over our heads in which the Lord doth not renew his mercies to us? *Lam. 3. 23, They are new every morning.*

9. Are you not in daily constant danger of one or other snare and temptation? Satan is never idle, he is never far from you, he is always busy, plotting

plotting some mischief or other, and should not we countermine and counterplot him by prayer? Every day hath its evils and crosses; how often is the heart out of order? how often are we ready to halt in Gods service, and make stops and delays? what need have we to be instant and constant in prayer?

10. As I said before, either you be children of God or not: If you be, how can you be a whole days time out of your heavenly fathers presence? a true child of God will love to be in his fathers presence. If you be not, but be heirs of hell for the present, how can you pass a day over your heads without strong cryings to God? methinks you should lay by all your other busi-nesses, and rise out of your beds, and forbear your meat and sleep, and be besides your selves for very fear. It is a wonder that secure sinners can be so secure, and that the consideration of their condition doth not overwhelm them, and quite break their brain; but alas for you, *Isa. 62.* 6, 7. you are not to hold your peace day nor night; you are to give the Lord no rest, evening, morning, and at noon, yea seven times, yea twenty times a day if possible, you should be crying forth your soul to God, and resolve with *David, Psal. 132.* 3, 4, 5, I will not go to my bed, I will not give sleep to mine eyes, nor slumber to mine eye-lids until I have reconciled my self to God, and have attained to a sure foundation of quiet and safety for my soul.

Under the Law the Lord commanded the morning and evening daily Burnt-offering; and the command of the Gospel is, *Pray without ceasing: pray always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with perseverance.* Had we but a love to it, we should be constant in it. And what excuses can we make, which other servants of God might not make as well as we? others as poor and poorer, and more straitned in the world than we, have found them time for Prayer, and all necessary Christian exercises for their souls, and have governed themselves and families in the fear of God; doth not Conscience say it is good and profitable to be instant and constant in prayer? and will it rejoice us upon a sick-bed to have gone against our Consciences?

In short, as you do by God, he will do by you. If you serve him by fits and starts, and pray when you list, he will serve you so too; be constant with God, and he will be constant with you; but if you forsake him, he will forsake you, *2 Chron.* 15. 2, and if God forsake us, wo be to us. What a case was poor *Saul* in when the Lord was departed from him, and answered him no more? you will not now call upon God, and time may come when you shall call upon God, and he will not hear you, *Prov.* 1. 24, 28. when if you had all the world it can do you no good; and you shall cry, Lord, Lord, have pity upon a poor sinner; and God shall abhor both you and your prayers.

prayers. O how sad is that when a poor sinner is in greatest need, and is going out of this world, to have his very prayers cast in his face as dung. Consider, if there be not good reason why we should all be constant in Prayer, and keep up a trade and course of Prayer. *Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation.*

*Application.*

1. The use of this may be, for reproof of Christians inconstancy in prayer, and frequent omitting this duty. And, O how common a sin is this ! Two sorts come under reproof, 1. Wicked men. 2. Gods dear Children. 1. Wicked people which either pray not at all, or but now and then. How often in a week do they wholly omit this duty? yea, how seldom do they do it at all? One would think they should be the more often in prayer, because when they do it, they do it but by halves. But alas, there is in them a worldly and impenitent Spirit, which kills their desires after heavenly things; and were it not to still their Consciences, they would not pray that little which they do, except it be some superstitious Papists, and hypocritical votaries, which place all their Religion in forms and ceremonies, and humane Traditions, and are precise observers of their prayer-hours, hoping to merit heaven by their hypocritical prayers, and to make amends to God for all their other sins, by their lifeless devotions.

votions. But such sacrifices are abomination with God, and God hath told them, *Isa. 1. 15, 16. Though they make many prayers, he will not hear them; their hands are full of blood, and wickedness is in them unput away.*

2. Gods dear Children come under reproof, many of which are much faulty in this matter of prayer, for not keeping to a constancy in prayer, and for frequent omissions and neglects in this duty.

1. We might have more time for prayer and communion with God, if we but would: We are apt to say we have not time, when the fault is in our selves, we make us more business than God hath made us, we do not redeem our time, we do not rightly spend and improve our time, we do not give to every thing its due place and time; and because we have not time for our souls and the world too, therefore we make sure to scant our souls, and give the world its full measure, and more. Were we but wise Merchants for our souls, and truly provident of our time, and walked circumspectly, how many more hours might we have for prayer! what precious time might we have in a morning, and at a night, and many times in the day, for communion with God! And O what riches might we procure to our souls by this trade of fervent and constant prayer. A quarter of an hours time in prayer well spent, O how precious is it! and how many precious quarters do we sleep and slug away, and talk, and  
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chat away, and eat, and drink away, and give away to the world, and needless business, and visits, and recreations, and idleness, and doing meer nothing, and twenty particulars which thief away our precious time, each week, yea each day ! O what profit would it be to our souls, were all these waste hours spent in prayer ! how sweet would it be to us to reflect upon, especially when we come to dye !

2. Another fault is, that we can so easily omit prayer, and hearken to Satans temptations, when we have no mind to the duty : what frivolous excuses can we invent ? what poor businesses will serve us to keep away from prayer ? any trifling worldly matter, any little laziness and deadness, any company to sit and talk with. God waits for us to have us upon our knees ; the spirit knocks at the door of our hearts, conscience whispers in us, and we have time and leisure to pray if we will. No such hinderance is in the way, but what we may overcome if we will, and yet we do often wholly omit the duty ; we will not so much as strive with our hearts, and force, and drag them what we can. But lazy and idle souls feign Lyons in the way, and imagine to our selves great difficulties in the work ; and because the flesh hath no mind to go, we take counsel of the flesh, and grieve the good spirit of God, and weaken our souls, and lose as much strength, and grace, and peace. O how many loud calls have we to prayer, but all will not serve to conquer a lazy and list-

listless mind? the mind being unwilling, breaks Gods command, silenceth conscience, choaks the motions of the spirit; prayer is omitted, and we learn a doctrine from the flesh, which is rather to omit a duty wholly, than to do it weakly and imperfectly. O which of us would so easily forbear our meals, our gains, or markets!

3. We seldom recount our losses this way, and thoroughly consider the damage, and lay it to heart, and recompence to our souls the omissions of prayer. Our loss of a quarter of an hours time in prayer is great loss, it is the loss of a meal or market for our souls, every grace of God within us is a loser. We diminish from that little stock we have, and provoke God to take our one Talent from us, and give it to him that hath ten, seeing us to be no more thankful for it, no better husbands of it. If we cannot alwayes keep to our time in prayer, if through necessity or weakness we be hindered, we should make amends to our souls by doubling our diligence and fervour another time, and redeeming time, to be so much the longer at another season, when it is better with us. But alas, we do not reckon with our souls for these losses, we are much behind-hand with our souls, many a prayer we owe our selves, many an hour in prayer we have hindered our souls of, and committed robbery against our selves. We might better have denied our bodies meat, and drink, and sleep, than our souls communion with God by prayer. By this our  
souls

souls live: where is the Christian that doth duly reckon with his soul for his defaults this way: When shall we make our souls amends for all the loss we have sustain'd this way, when God and Conscience have called to this duty, and nothing hath kept us away, but a lazy carnal self-will mind?

4. We love not to be constant in this duty, we do not love to be tied to rules, to be under yolk and government; we would be loose, and at liberty, accounting it bondage to be under the Lords yolk, and liberty to be free to serve Satan, and please the flesh: we do naturally hate holiness and spiritual strictness, and like not that preciseness and vigour in the Service of God which would shew sin no favour at all, and which seeketh the utter ruine of it. O what dislike is in our hearts secretly against the constant and uninterrupted unwearied doing of this duty? if we be constant in it, we are apt to be formal and customary in it; and if we be inconstant in it, we are apt to lose ground, to wound conscience by fresh sins, and to come to God with wounds and bruises in our souls, and great backwardness and strangeness to God and the duty. O what dragging and haling must there go to get us to prayer! when do we need such haling and pulling to our common meals, and to matters of gain and carnal pleasure? If we had but more love to the duty, we were more pardonable, the Lord would pity and favour us: love  
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covereth a multitude of faults ; but our hearts within do much rise against close and spiritual constancy in this duty ; the flesh is ever and anon calling us off, and murmuring in our bosoms as though it were hell it self, and slavery to be under such law to God, and under such tyes and rules of duty ; that's all the quarrel we have against Gods Laws, because they limit us as we think within too narrow bounds, and call us off from carnal to spiritual freedom, Gods service being the most perfect freedom.

5. Lastly, we are very apt to question whether it be our duty to be constant in prayer: like a sloathful servant that being commanded upon an errand or business, instead of obeying, he falls to arguing and disputing whether he be bound to do it or no; and when once *Conscience* hath slackned the reins of Gods command, and can perswade it self that it is not a duty to be constant in prayer, we be under continual temptation to omit it. Where, say they, hath God commanded us to pray so often, and so long, and to observe times and seasons of prayer? This argues little sign of grace: could we but get these souls to have as great an hunger to prayer, as to their ordinary food, they would need no other answer than what their own appetite would make. Must an hungry man need a Scripture to tell him how often he must eat? No more doth a hungry soul need a Scripture to tell him how often he must pray. The hungry man can digest two or three Meals a day ; a sick-

ly diseased man cannot digest one good meal in a week ; a healthful man doth not need to be told how often to eat, as often as his health requires, and his constitution and business needs. So a right healthful soul is neither superstitious nor loose, but observing the mean between both extreames, doth so keep to hours and times of prayer, as (by his good will) never to omit any, without necessity and charity call him to some greater work, or such as cannot tarry : And he doth not so keep to them, but that at all times when God and Conscience shall call him away to more instant duty, he leaves the lesser duty for the greater, being grieved he cannot have time for both ; but since he cannot, doth endeavour to be chearful in doing that which God calls him to.

This inconstancy in Prayer is a great evil ; that you may be warned against it, I shall set it before you in these two discoveries : 1. In its Causes. 2. In its Effects.

1. In its Causes ; it comes from a bitter root, it argues the fountain to be bad when the streams are poysonous and unwholsome ; it argues the heart to be so far evil, it springs from a root of bitterness within, there is some lust within, there is some enmity against God, there is want of love to God in whole or in part. If our hearts were so right with God as they should be, there would not be this coldness and inconstancy in prayer : *Job 27. 10, Will the hypocrite pray always ?* inconstancy in a good thing doth argue unsoundness and

and hypocrisie ; there is some deceit in the heart, there is either some reigning sin, or some strong lust ; Inconstant lovers we use to say are not true lovers ; true love is constant and lasting ; he that loves to day, and to morrow hates, did not love truly ; there cannot be a disorder in the life, but it proceeds from some inward cause : Never say thy heart is good when thy life is bad ; for that is but adding to thy sin, and making the matter worse by a sinful excuse. Examine thy self, look within, what is the cause thou art inconstant in prayer, that thou dost not pray each morning, that thou dost not pray each evening, and at all times when Conscience shall call thee to it : Look within, and thou will find the cause to be there ? 1. There is something wanting in the heart which should be there.

2. There is something in the heart which should not be there.

1. There is something wanting in the heart which should be there ; there wanteth heavenly knowledg that should be there to make thee know the worth of Prayer, the worth of Grace, thine own great wants, and the preciousness of thy soul, and thy time, and the great things pertaining to Eternity ; there wanteth love to God, there wanteth a stronger root of faith, there wanteth cleanness of heart, spiritual hunger and thirst after God and his righteousness.

2. There is something in the soul which should not be there ; thou omittest to pray, thou risest with-



without prayer, thou goest to bed without prayer, thou enterest upon business without prayer; why is this? there is pride in thee, there is worldliness in thee, there is lust and uncleanness in thee, there is malice, every passion or discontent in thee. Something is the matter, there cannot be smog, but there is some fire, there is a want of God in the soul. Conscience within doth not do its office duly, conscience is asleep, or but half waken; find out the cause. In general, thy heart within is base and hypocritical, do not say thy heart is good this while; no, it is naught, it is base, so far; though thy heart be never so good in other respects, it is base and wretched in this. And therefore spare it not, but tear thy heart in pieces with godly sorrow, and learn to find out more of the evil of thy heart by this, and to know that thou art either wholly, or in great measure, a hypocrite, which is the worst of sinners. Whatever the world may think of thee, God whose judgment is true, sees and knows thy heart, there is rottenness in it, there is filth and canker in it, there is something to be purged out by repentance, by weeping, and mourning, and tears; be humbled for it; and if thou canst not get rid of it as thou wouldest, groan under it as a heavy burden, and cry out, *O wretched man, who shall deliver me from this body of death!*

2. Judge of the evil of this disease of inconstancy in prayer, by the effects. And of this I may say, as the Scripture of God, *Behold a troop com-*

*eth.* This hath a great many mischiefs attending it; but I shall put both together, coldness and inconstancy in prayer, and these evils go along with it.

1. Leanness in our souls: withering, consumptive, dying souls, as though we had the green-sickness, or were like *Pharaohs* lean kine, ill-favoured, lean-flesh'd; we are fed in fat pastures, but we have lean souls. We abound with mercies, but there is leanness in our souls; there is little of God, and Christ, and Heaven in our souls. Inconstancy and coldness in prayer is a bane to our souls, it doth famish and consume us, and keep us bare as a rake. We look like death, we have no flesh on our backs: Mark all that be inconstant and lukewarm in prayer, if they be not lean within. O what fatning means have we, the unsearchable riches of Christ and his Gospel to feed on: what is there wanting on Gods part to make our souls fat and flourishing; and behold we are lean, exceeding lean, like blasted corn. There's husk, but no corn; and whence is this but from our coldness and inconstancy in prayer? We are not frequent and fervent in prayer. This is the cause of our leanness, mend your prayers, set to prayer with all your might, be instant and constant in prayer, and see if it will not be better with your souls, and that in a short time. God would have us to have fat abounding souls, he would have us to flourish in the courts of holiness; every one to be like calves of

of the stall, rich in all grace, spiritual comforts and experiences, that we might be an honour to Religion, a help to others, and a continual spring of joy and comfort to our selves. And alas ! we are lean within, barren and unfruitful in all godliness ; a great sin and shame to be lean in fat pastures. This is one main cause, coldness and inconstancy in prayer.

2. Frequent falls into sin, often wounding conscience by new sins, looking one way, going in crooked paths, splitting upon rocks, and dashing our feet against the stones for want of wisdom, and wariness, and steddily walking before God. O how many are our haltings and failings in a day, in a week ! I know the best man hath his weaknesses, but there's a difference ; the lives of many comparatively are very free from all sin outwardly, and all discernable weaknesses ; they may be discerned by their even and regular conversations, that they are men which walk with God, and have a great awe of God upon their souls ; and this is a sign they are much in prayer, and keep up constancy and fervour in this duty. Others are spotted Christians, there are blots and blemishes in their lives, they pray and sin, and sin and pray ; they go from their knees to their sins, and renew their relapses and provocations ; they do not ply the throne of grace, they do not lay siege to heaven, they are cowards in prayer, they are overcome of themselves in prayer, they faint in asking, and lose the blessing for want of fervour

and sincerity in prayer. Mark when you are careless and negligent in prayer, if you do not fall and renew your sins, if you do not omit some duty or other, if you do not commit some sin or other: By prayer we fetch strength from God against sin, and become armed with holy fear and watchfulness, and retain more of God upon our souls, and dare not break loose from the Lord. If you would be kept from sinning, and walk evenly with the Lord, and preserve your Consciences pure, be instant and constant in prayer, try this course, and mark the issue.

3. Another sad effect, is deadness and lukewarmness in all the worship and ordinances of Jesus Christ. And, O what a sin and plague is that to sit under Sermons like a block! to hear a preacher speaking of everlasting things, as if death were in sight, and sleep under him! to read the Scriptures, to sing Psalms, and joyn in prayer, and be at the Sacrament, as if we had no life or spirit in us! Some mens prayers and preachings may be compared to the Stars in a cold frosty night, bright, but cold, there's no heat, no life in them. It's a sign they are little in this soul-warming duty of prayer; it is praying souls which sweat themselves in prayer, and pour forth their very hearts, and strain the whole man in prayer, and are constant in this duty, which go away with the sap and marrow of ordinances, when others that sit by them are drowsie and sleepy, and savour nothing of the Prayer or Sermon; but are ready to  
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pick faults, and to judg the Preacher and the Sermon, when they should judg themselves. How sad is it to come to Ordinances, to come to Sacraments, to be among the Saints, to pray and praise God, and feel no sweetness, feed only upon the husk and shell, and feel nothing of virtue and kernel. This is for want of constancy and fervency in prayer: Ordinances are never more sweet to you, than when you take most pains in prayer, to fit your hearts to them. How sweet then is the word, and Psalms, and the Sacraments, and communion with the Saints? With what joy and delight do we go to the house of God, and the name of the Lord Jesus delights our souls, and a day in his courts is better to us than a thousand elsewhere? We are ravished with delight, we could set all day under the word, and not be weary; but when we let down this work of prayer, our hearts within are like a stone. The sweetest truths lose all their sweetness, and the most piercing and soul-awakening truths and sermons, are to us but like the sparks of the smiths Anvil, to the dog that lyes asleep; for all their knocking, and for all the sparks flye about his ears, he can sleep and be secure, fearing and feeling no harm.

4. Another sad effect, is disorders at home, Family-strifes, and Family-disorders; as prayer goes down, sin goes up, the good order and government of the Family is weakned, Prayer makes good order where it comes, and is duly

practised; and where it is neglected, and done coldly and seldom, there creeps in breaches and disorders, frequent brawls and contentions, Family-strifes, the Lords day is profaned, the souls of Children and Servants are neglected; Gods name is not sanctified in the Family, his worship is let down, or deadly performed, every thing is out of place. Families should be little Churches, each one doing his own work, and keeping in his place, and aiming at the good of the whole, walking in the fear of God, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, edifying one another to the great joy of the governors, the rejoycing of pastors, and the great increase of piety. But O how rare are such Families to be found! Coldness and inconstancy in prayer is one main hindering cause. *Cornelius* is said to be *a devout man, fearing God with all his house, and gave much alms to the people, and prayed alway*, Acts 10. 2. He was constant in prayer, and that was one thing which made him to have such a Family, *fearing God with all his house*. Lively and constant prayer is the great reformer of Families, and a main part of their good order and government. Where this is wanting, there is good government wanting; if Gods service go down, there's no good order. Let God be served, and the soul secured, that's the best order; if these be slighted, there's no good order, but all is confusion, the cart before the horses. Let it bring in what gain it will for the world, it brings along with it the curse of God, *Prov. 3. 33.*



5. Coldness and inconstancy in prayer, strengthens temptations, and puts life and courage into our enemies. Satan seeing us remiss in prayer, hath thereby a watch-word, or warning given him to set upon us. Without prayer, as hath been said, we are like Souldiers going to fight without armour and weapons. What can we do against our spiritual enemies, except the Lord be with us? and how can we expect the help of God, when we grossly fail to ask it? when *Moses*, as hath been said, lets down his hand in prayer, *Amalek* prevails; and when he lifts up his hands in prayer, *Israel* prevails. If prayer go down, the Devil prevails, he becomes strong, and gets the upper ground, and bears us down. Keep up a course of prayer, ply the throne of grace by cries and tears to heaven, and see if thou do not prevail against Satan, and conquer all his temptations. How strong is a Christian to resist all his temptations when he comes from prayer, full of the Majesty and Presence of God upon his soul? what a sense of God and eternity, and spiritual matters, hath he upon his soul? how light doth he set by the world? how tender is his conscience? how strong are his resolutions, what liveliness hath he in his soul, what courage and boldness to go through all encounters, and run the Christian race with patience, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of his Faith? If you would be valiant Souldiers of Jesus Christ, and fight against the Devil, so as to overcome him and all the

enemies of your soul, be *Jacob's* in prayer, evening and morning, and at noon, (at all meet times) pray and cry aloud to God; look up to heaven, be much upon your knees, engage the Lord of hosts to be for you. *Pray alwayes*, faith our Saviour, *that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things*, Luk. 21. 36. *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation*, Mar. 14. 38. Prayerless souls are Satans spoil. He does almost what he will with them, he winnows them like Wheat. *Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not*, Luk. 22. 31, 32.

6. Coldness and inconstancy in prayer sharpens the cross, and makes tribulations sinking and intolerable: Prayer breeds patience, and patience lives and grows by prayer. Impatient persons are wanting to themselves in prayer, they do not keep up this Trade of prayer. Thence it is that we are like raw flesh, unfodden Christians, milk-sops, that are able to endure nothing. We can scarce abide a reproach, a slander, or nick-name; we cannot abide to be crossed, burdens and afflictions gall us, outward wants squeeze us, the frowns of the world, the threatnings of men, doleful tidings, the fear of famine and war, and pestilence, and evils to befall the body: these go to our hearts, and make us at our wits-end; would we but be fervent and frequent in prayer, what mortified Christians should we be, hardy  
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Soldiers of Jesus Christ, we should be weather-beaten, strong to endure any thing the Lord should lay upon us, and be more than Conquerours; impenitent Christians are like unsalted raw flesh that will soon rot, that is not fit to be eaten while raw. Patience is *propugnaculum animæ*, it arms and fits a man for all weathers, for all times; come what will come, patience arms a man against all adversities; how can you be patient without this grace of prayer? what can make us patient, but the good will and pleasure of God, the joys of heaven, a good Conscience, and heart-assurance that all shall work together for our good? It is by prayer that we come to be strengthened in our souls; *Psal. 138. 3, In the day when I called upon thee, thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.* Jacob having wrestled with God by prayer, was strong in spirit, and he went to meet his brother *Esau* with undaunted courage; *I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.*

7. Coldness and inconstancy in prayer is a very ill Purveyor for an evil day. Brethren, there will a day of trial come, there may come days of darkness, days of affliction and tribulation; it will behove Christians to be stored with treasure and riches in their souls, that they may live and not die; who knows what times may come, shaking times that shall try us all? doth it not behove us like *Joseph* in the seven years of plenty, to make us barns and spiritual store-houses, and lay up provision against the seven years of famine, all will  
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be gone, all will be spent in these years, all will be little enough to encounter with death, and shoot the gulf into eternity; and how shall we lay up store against an evil day, but by prayers and tears, by earnest crys to heaven, laying up prayers with God for our selves, and for our little ones, and for our household, against a time of need, *Hebr. 4. 16.* Engage the Lord to be for you then. It is the neglecters of prayer, and such as be cold and careless in prayer, that will shortly feel a want, and will be pinched in their souls, when they shall have no stock to live upon, no holy experiences, no holy assurances, no heart-treasure congested and heaped together by prayer; praying souls are likeliest to be remembered by God in the hour of death, in the day of calamity. Christians be wise, a spending-time will come; winter is at hand, days of darkness, when all about you may be fighting, and heaviness, things may go hardly with you; who then would be without cordials and supports, and reviving consolations? such things may be had and laid up in store against the worst of times; ask and ye shall have; you may come to want Ordinances, Ministers, Friends, Counsels, Instructions for your Souls; evils may be upon you thick and three-fold, so that you cannot escape them, but must either abide them, or sink and perish under them. O now go into your Closets, pour forth tears and prayers to God, be constant and fervent in prayer, and this will prepare and fore-arm you against  
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the worst of times. Prayer will lift you up above the world, and worldly fears, it will set you up on high with God, and lead you to the rock that is higher than all, so that when evil tidings come, you shall not be afraid, your hearts shall be fixed trusting in God, and the God of heaven will be a sanctuary, and a hiding place to you, and all things shall work together for good to you.

8. Coldness and inconstancy in prayer deprives us of that rich and rare jewel of assurance, so that we go mourning all the day long, and walk uncomfortably, and are a scandal to the ungodly to keep them from the ways of God, because by our uncomfortable life we tempt them to think that there is no pleasure and joy in a holy life; O how can you live day by day, and from week to week doubting and uncertain what shall become of your souls for ever. A good man coming from a Sermon, where the Minister had much pressed upon Christians to labour after Assurance, he goes straight from the Sermon into his Closet, and bolts the door upon him, and falls to Prayer, resolving he would not give over till the Lord had given him this blessing of Assurance, and the Lord gave him his request. I mention this with caution, that we are not to be peremptory in tying God to our demands or desires about Assurance. This is worth your pains and looking after; Assurance would fill you with continual comfort: The way to have it, is to be instant and constant in prayer; this is not all that is to be done,

done, but this is one principal means, and where this is wanting, all the rest will be in vain. Cry aloud to God, open your mouths, and be mighty fervent with God, and set time apart for prayer, and keep to it, and in time the Lord will answer your prayers, and grant you the desires of your soul in this matter; if ever we attain to Assurance, it must be by close and fervent praying; *Ask and ye shall have, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you*; whatsoever we ask of God in faith according to his will, we may be sure he will not deny us. O what pity that Saints should live without assurance, and lie them down and rise up, and walk from day to day, not knowing if they die what shall become of soul and body everlastingly! ply this business of prayer better.

9. Another mischief coming by neglect and coldness in prayer, is the grieving and provoking of Gods spirit: we provoke him to go away from our souls, and to be displeased with us; where he is not much made of, he will not tarry; by the careless omission of prayer, we drive him away; the spirit of God is a spirit of supplications, he commandeth and moveth to prayer, he delighteth in prayer, and encourageth to it; he is grieved when we omit this holy duty, and are cold and inconstant in it. And O what a sad evil is it when the Spirit of God goes from us! what can we do without him? how blind and weak and feeble are we? he is the life of our souls, he is to our  
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souls what our souls are to our bodies. Praying souls are likeliest to have most of the presence of Gods Spirit in their souls; and they who have most of Gods Spirit, are the choicest Christians, the most beloved of God, the most comely and excellent in their lives. Do not your own experiences testifie this, how sadly God is provoked, and his Spirit grieved when we leave off to pray; the Lord leaves us and we can do nothing without him; and if he come not to us again, how sad is our case. O therefore as you would desire to have the spirit of Christ always to dwell in you, always to abide in you, always to strengthen and rejoice, and guide and comfort you, keep up a course of prayer, and maintain communion with God by prayer, and be not called off by needless business from prayer; pray weakly rather than not at all. It is better for the most part to do a duty as well as we can, than quite omit it. By this latter we do grieve and greatly provoke the Spirit of God; by the other we do stir up his bowels to pity and help us: when he sees us labouring our hearts in prayer, and striving against our sins, and doing our best, and mourning for our weakness, this doth please him well, and this doth greatly move him to help and relieve us; and often he comes in at the end of such prayers, or in some part, and doth ease us of our burden, and gives us to experience that it is not in vain to seek the Lord.

10. Lastly, to add but this one, by this coldness

ness and inconstancy in prayer we unfit our selves to all the service of God both in our general and particular callings, and deprive our selves of the blessing of God upon all we take in hand, and provoke the Lord to blast our endeavours, to send upon us scourges, and crosses, and afflictions, to teach us better how to pray; *In their affliction they will seek me early, saith the Lord, Hos. 5. ult.* Alas, if we fail in this duty of prayer, we fail in all; this is of such universal influence to the right ordering of our hearts and lives, that we may as soon hope that our fields shall bring forth corn without plowing and sowing, as that our souls should prosper without praying; we greatly hinder our selves, we rob others whom we should help, we are unfruitful and unprofitable in our places; we thrive not by the means of grace, we lose the benefit of all Ordinances, we are a prey to Satan, a dishonour to God and his ways, we are unheavenly in our callings, unholy in our conversations, disorderly in our families, unprovided for an evil day, unable to bear crosses; without wisdom, without fervour and life in our souls; how many are the evils and mischiefs of letting down this work of prayer? O how afraid should you be of losing one season of prayer? what do you lose at that one bout? Is not communion with God precious? is not the exercise of Grace precious? is not the comfort of the Holy Ghost precious? is not the joy of a good Conscience precious? is not heavenly wisdom  
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precious? *If any man want wisdom, let him ask it of God, who gives liberally and upbraideth not, Jam. 1. 5.* Let me then engage you, Christians, to these two things :

1. To be fervent in prayer.
2. To be constant in it, not to omit, or do it slightly.

In order whereto, I shall give you these helps by way of Direction: Let them not die in the hearing; you cannot but be convinced that prayer is good and profitable for you, and that it is a great sin and hazard to be cold and negligent in it: set your hearts therefore to all the words which I shall teach you from the Book of God, and faithfully practice these ten words of Direction and Advice, and I doubt not but you will be most eminent persons in prayer, and excelling in all the parts of godliness.

1. If you would be constant and fervent in prayer, you must be resolved Christians, and keep up a resolute spirit for holiness and eternal life, in opposition to wavering and neutrality; unresolvèdness makes us weak to any duty; resolution makes us break through a whole troop of oppositions; resolve for heaven and eternal life, and resolve that you will not be hindered from prayer, that you will rise in a morning to prayer, that you will have some time in the evening for Communion with your God. If you do not resolve upon it, you will not do it; for resolution goes before action, and is the foreleading step

step to performance ; there's but a step betwixt resolution and performance ; a matter throughly resolv'd on, is more than half done. It is reported of one that was an extraordinary Christian, that did exceed and out-strip all about him in all manner of godly conversation, and this was his practice, he bound and accustomed himself to a constant course of Prayer, and come who and what would, he would not omit Prayer when his season of Prayer came ; and being asked by his companions and Christian acquaintance, how he could observe such a strict course ? he answer'd them, that sometimes he found himself hard put to it ; and but that his resolution was very strong, he could not have done it. I mention not this for a binding unalterable Law to all persons ; he that can receive it let him ; it may teach us all thus much, that a resolute determined spirit for prayer, and a holy life, is excellently useful and conducing to the making of us constant and fervent in prayer. Resolve while I am speaking to you, as much as lyes in you, to be instant and constant in prayer, and maintain this resolvedness throughout all your course.

2. Use an holy violence with your self, compel your self to the work ; generally and for the most part as hath been already hinted, it is better to do a duty weakly, than not at all. Very often we go to prayer with much haling and heart-backwardness, and come off with much joy and enlargedness. There may be more grace and  
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true sincerity in such prayers where the spirit is willing and the flesh is weak; and we strive and wrestle, and do our best then in many a prayer wherein we may be much enlarged, and not so pestered with deadness and distractions. I counsel all sincere Christians as much as in them lyes, to use a kind of violence with themselves in this matter of prayer, or else very often you will omit prayer, and thereby incur further guilt and danger to your souls.

3. Take heed of sinning, for this wounds the soul, and makes us we have no mind to come to God; keep Conscience pure, and you will go with boldness into the presence of God; guilt upon the soul drives us from God through the corruption of our natures; one would think that after we have sinned, we had the more need to go to God; that is true, but guilt makes us afraid, and we have no mind to draw nigh to God. We see this in our first Parents, after they had sinned, Conscience terrified them, and they went and hid themselves, and made the matter worse by an excuse, and kept off from God. Keep sin out of you soul; or if you sin, repent of it speedily, lye not in it, but go to God by penitential prayer, and humble your self; the longer you keep off from God, the worse it is; the sooner the thorn is out of your eye, the quicker you will have ease; a green wound is more quickly and safely heal'd, and with far less pain, than an old rankled sore.

4. Take heed of surfeiting and excess; when the belly is full, we have little mind to any thing, save idleness, and sleep, and talk: And thence it is, that fasting is so useful in prayer, because the soul is most apt to be most lively, and spiritual, and vigorous in prayer, when the belly is least clogged and loaded: excess in Meat and Drink, dulls the soul, and cuts the sinews of prayer. It both keeps us from prayer, and when we come to it, we are weak and cold, and our words freeze in our mouth, and stick in us like some meats that we cannot get down, sticks in our throats; an ill-condition'd throat and belly, is the death and cut-throat of many a prayer: Be sober and temperate, eat and drink no more than will suffice to fit you for the service of God, both in your general and particular calling, so that you may rise from your meat to prayer, and be strengthened by your food to pray more vigorously and affectionately.

5. Be humble, and deeply sensible of your vileness and wretchedness, and exceeding weakness; and let the sense thereof drive you to seek help from the Lord by prayer: Humble suiters are likeliest to speed; and humble souls will be most upon their knees, acknowledging how weak they are of themselves; what need they have of the daily help and grace of God to their souls. Pride is both most hateful to God, and the greatest deformity of our souls; and it keeps us from prayer, except it be such Pharisees and Hypocrites as  
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pray chiefly to be seen of men. Were you but more sensible of the wants of your souls, you would be more earnest in prayer; hunger will better teach a beggar how to beg, than learning and art; it is proud persons that are least in prayer, and the greatest enemies of right holy praying; humility empties the soul of all carnal conceits of its own excellency and sufficiency, and constrains it from the feeling of its own sinfulness and misery, and indigent state, to seek for mercy and relief where it is to be had. If pride make the prayer, it is abomination with God; twenty words from an humble and awful sincere heart, are of more price with God and all good men, than never so many from hypocrisie and pride. Load your souls with the sense of your sin and misery, and your utter need of the continual help and grace of God, and keep humble, and you will run into the arms of God by prayer, as little Children will run into the Mothers arms at the sight of any ugly picture, or frightful thing, and will take fast hold of their parents, when they are in danger to fall, *Psal. 10. 17, Lord thou hast heard the desire of the humble, thou will prepare their heart, thou will cause thine ear to hear.*

6. Take heed of worldliness, and worldly hinderances and distractions. This hinders us in prayer, and this hinders us from prayer: this makes us to omit prayer, and this makes us to slight prayer, and this robs us of all our praying-time, and fills our heads with worldly thoughts, and

our hearts with worldly cares and affections, and our hands with worldly business and cumbers. Shake off over-much of the world, and watch against the world, or it will mightily hinder you in this great matter of prayer; the world and business will be still nipping you of that little time you have for prayer; the world will be instant and constant with you day by day, to let prayer alone, and the work and business of your souls alone: Stand by God, and stand by Christ, and eternal life; cease Conscience, away Spirit, let my soul sink, and do what it will; and come the world, and come business, and cumber. I cannot have time for prayer and thee too; and therefore I will make bold with prayer, and do the worlds matters. This is the language and practice of worldliness, the great destroyer of all manner of godly prayer; but be wise and wary for your souls. Seek first the Kingdom of Heaven, and the righteousness thereof, and all other things shall be added to you. Remember *Mary* and *Martha*, be not cumbered about many things, mind the one thing necessary; get into thy closet, look up to God, and be gaining time from the world, that you may spend it in prayer.

7. Be diligent in your callings: Experience teacheth the Saints, that honest and conscientious labour in callings, and constancy and fervency in prayer, do best consist together, and do mutually befriend each other. Idleness of body breedeth  
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and increaseth idleness of soul. There's no such inconsistency between prayer, and honest common labours, but that the heart may be much in mental prayers, and secret liftings up to God, when our hands are busie, imployed in labour: when our bodies are moderately exercised with labour, even unto some weariness, then is prayer sweet to the soul, and as recreation to our minds; but when the body is idle, it hath no mind at all to spiritual exercises. In great wisdom and mercy the Lord hath appointed us callings in the world, which be a very great preservative and defence against Temptations, and are helps to Mortification, and keeping clean and sweet the mind and thoughts within; but idleness disposeth to the greatest evils, setteth lusts a working, openeth the door to Satan into our hearts, and insensibly dampeth the warmth of the soul, and hardens it against prayer. These two things I commend to all Christians, to be fervent and constant in prayer, to be diligent and painful in your callings, avoiding all extreams, both of earthliness and idleness, and learning to be heavenly, and walk with God, and keep up what in you lyes a praying ejaculatory spirit in your callings, and often renewing the thoughts and intentions of God, and your ultimate end; and thereby maintaining fragrancy, and spiritual vigour in your souls.

8. Redeem your time, and be good Husbands of your time, morning-time, evening-time, week-

day, and Lords-day-time, all your time, lavish none away, if you do, you will want time for prayer; you cannot waste time, but you will want time for one duty or other. God hath given us no time to waste! O prize time, and redeem time for prayer, forecast for prayer, contrive your matters wisely, that by all means you may have time and room for prayer; and when you have not time as you would, spend that little time you have in the most necessary work, and that which can least tarry. Take heed of all time-wasting company, discourse, and business, and suffer not your precious time to be thiev'd away. A common excuse is, I have not time; the flesh and the world thief away our time, and then we come and plead necessity. I have not time! but hast thou not time for prayer, if thou didst but highly prize and duly husband and improve it all?

9. If you would be *Jacobs*, and *Hannahs*, and *Anna's* in prayer, you must do this to be sure, and that is to live by faith, and not by sense; without faith you will not pray, nor value prayer at all; it is faith which makes souls to pray, and to pray with all their might, and to keep up a trade of prayer. Souls that live by sense, see no reason for prayer, nor mind it; they are glued to this world, making their belly their God; and like the old world, eating and drinking, and marrying, and giving in marriage, till the flood came and swept them all away. Where-

as godly *Noah*, his faith moved him with fear, and he prepared an ark for the saving of himself and his household, Heb: 11. 7. Believing-souls do by faith see another world, into which they are passing, which is eternal; and this present world they see passing away, and therefore they are instant with God by prayer for an everlasting portion for a life to come. It is faith which doth open the window into the other world, and gives us an evidential sight of spiritual things in some measure relating to disposition and practice, so as they are in themselves, and doth rouse us from our sleep in sin, and makes us cry to God for the life of our souls. Faith gives us to perceive in the glass of Gods word, what is a Christians business in this world, and how much it concerns him to watch and pray that he enter not into temptation, and to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure, and to cry to God now, as he would cry to God if he lay a dying, or stood naked before the judgment-seat of God, and had liberty to make one prayer to God for his poor soul, and so be doomed and sentenced for ever into heaven or hell. O get the grace of Faith into your souls, and increase and strengthen your faith, and maintain faith in lively act and exercise, and then you will be champions in prayer, and Christ will say to you, To him that believeth all things are possible; and according to thy faith so shall it be unto you. *James* tells you, *If any man lack wisdom, let him beg it of God, who*

*giveth liberally, and upbraideth not*, Jam. i. 5. but let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for if he ask without faith, let him not think that he shall receive any thing from the Lord. O live by faith, above the world. Have your hearts in heaven, go into the Mount with faith and prayer, and view the glory of heaven, the torments of hell, this vain world, the great and mighty God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the state of all persons, creatures, and things in this world, and in that to come, and from the abundance of your hearts pour forth your souls to God in the name of the Lord Jesus by prayer, and so practise; and O what rare Christians will you be ! it will soon be seen that prayer is an unknown thing; faith and prayer will do wonders. Never hope to speed in prayer without faith, the saving faith of Jesus Christ.

10. Lastly, If you would be instant and constant in prayer, you must be instant and constant in all other duty and service without partiality, or casting off any part of duty; what are you better except you depart from iniquity? what are you better to spend half an hour in prayer in a morning, and so soon as you have done, go to the ale-house, and there drink till you be drunk; and pray again, and be drunk again? this is to turn prayer into mockery: though prayer be a great and principal part of Religion, yet it is not the whole of Religion; God hath no such high account of prayer, as that for the sake of prayer he will give you leave to break



break all his other Laws, and live as you list. God hath no where said, if thou pray morning and evening, and at noon, and cry aloud, that this shall serve for all thy duty and Religion; but as all other Religion without prayer is but a vain Religion, and none of Christs true Religion; so though thou pray never so often and loud, and live after the flesh, and givest the reins to thy lusts, thy prayer is but a mocking of God, and it is but a going to hell upon thy knees. There are two very great errours in Religion, and they are as common as dangerous.

1. The error of those which make them a Religion without prayer.

2. The error of those which make prayer all their Religion.

1. The error of those which make them a Religion without prayer, and these we may fear are a great many, up and down the Church of God, which live in the gross neglect, omission and contempt of prayer. O how many prayerless Families are there, and prayerless Closets, prayerless Quakers, and prayerless Papists, and prayerless Protestants, people of all sorts that pretend to be of this or that sect or party, but indeed are truly of no Religion but one, and that is to be Atheists and Infidels, to live without God in the world, hoping to come to heaven by their carnal good meanings, by their ignorance and blind devotion and sensual course of life; these people would persuade us that prayer is nothing, that

that a good life may be without prayer, and that a man may be a godly man, and of Christs Religion, whether he pray or pray not; but God will shortly confute all these prayerless people, and make them to know and feel that there is no more true and saving Religion, than there is true prayer; and that all that will be saved must call upon the name of the Lord, and have the spirit of grace and supplications.

2. The other error is of them which make prayer all their Religion. There are a sort of Pharisees and hypocrites which oppress the poor, and are unmerciful and unrighteous, and hope to mend all with praying; that would have no body to pray by their good will but in words and forms of their inventing; that make no great matter of being profane, haters of the Saints, and leading ungodly and fleshly lives, so they can repeat over a number of formal prayers, and hypocritically confess their sins, and stop the mouth of Conscience for a while with tricks and devices of their own making; they may do it for a while, but shortly death will be here, and either grace or vengeance will make them all to know that prayer is no patron of wickedness, nor refuge for disobedience. All that name the name of Christ depart from iniquity; the sacrifice of the wicked is abomination with God; he that turneth away his ear from hearing the Law, even his prayer shall be abomination; make not lyes your refuge.

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Let this be your main care to be instant and constant in prayer, and to be equally instant and constant in all other duty and obedience; be as zealous and fervent in prayer as you can; but withal, remember to be as zealous in all other duty; and if your zeal in prayer exceed your zeal in all other the service of God, you may groundedly suspect that so far it is false and hypocritical zeal; take heed and beware, for by both these ways you may go to hell, making you a Religion without prayer, and making prayer all your Religion, so as to stand for all piety and observance towards God, and all equity, charity, and compassion towards men, and for all purity, temperance and sobriety towards our selves.

I shall here annex a few words more by way of counsel and warning to Christian souls to take heed of the *Quakers* Religion, so far as relates to this matter of prayer, as also by way of compassion and charitable rebuke and compellation to the *Quakers* themselves, such especially of whom there is more hope.

Enough is said in the foregoing Sermons for the opening of the true nature of prayer, as also how excellent and necessary it is, and of how much interest in the saving-Religion of Jesus Christ. If therefore the *Quakers* Religion be a prayerless Religion, denying or subverting true prayer, all that will be saved are to flee from it, and to sever themselves from it as gross impiety.

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I do not yet say that the *Quakers* Religion is a prayerless Religion. I shall put it to the proof, and here let all impartial persons judg.

There are but these four sorts of prayer, secret prayer by a mans self alone, Family-prayer with our households, publick prayer in the Congregation, and prayer with Christian brethren, sick persons and others, statedly or occasionally. Now how far they do by their Principles allow, and by their practice own and observe all or any of these sorts of prayer, themselves know best; but so far as we which live among them can discern by their course of life at home and abroad, and can gather by their writings, they do seem generally to be a prayerless people, and to be void of the spirit of grace and supplications, for all they pretend so much to the spirit above others.

1. For secret personal prayer by ones self alone, this we cannot tell because we are not with them; but we may reasonably and justly fear the generality of them do very seldom, if at all, pray by themselves, though our Saviour hath expressly enjoined this sort of prayer, *Mat. 6.* and all true Christians practice it. Many I have read and heard have spoken against Family-prayer, but never any that I could hear of have ever spoken against secret prayer by ones self. I appeal to the *Quakers* own Consciences if they do not generally and for the most part live without personal secret prayer performed by themselves alone.

2. And for Family-prayer, it is evident and apparent

parent to all, that they do not call upon God, nor perform unto him Family-prayer and invocation according to the godly practice of all the people of God; and how they will avoid that imprecation of the Prophet against such Families as call not upon Gods name, it concerns them much to consider, *Jer. 10. ult.* I grant that Families in this place takes in whole Tribes and Kingdoms; and that by calling upon the name of God is meant more than strictly prayer and invocation; but that is because prayer is so eminent a part of Religion, that it is here put for all Religion, a special part for the whole, and so prayer must needs be included. And also families or households as such cannot be excluded out of the imprecation, without some violence to the Text.

3. And as for Church-prayer, or prayer in the publick meetings; neither can I give such account of this, because I come not at them; but if credible common fame may be believed, there is but little of prayer in their publick meetings; and when they do at any time pray, two main parts of prayer, Confession and begging forgiveness, are mainly left out; and being examined by the true rules of prayer, they would be found to be very lame disorderly prayers, favouring much of ignorance, carnality, and a fleshly dead heart. Let any one but pen down their publick meeting-prayers, and compare them with the right rules of prayer, and judg if all be right with them as it should be, and as the Saints prayers are.

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4. And then for private communion with brethren, and praying by sick and dying persons, I never heard of any, and I think few others have, and I think they seldom or never do it. Now I leave it to any impartial Christian to judge if this be a praying Religion.

If you shall go to their Writings, you will find as little about prayer there, as in their practice. One would hope to meet with some account of their Faith and Religion touching prayer in their Catechisms, and those Writings which contain their Principles. The largest account that I can find in any of those that I have read, so far as my memory serves me, is in a few small leaves in the end of *William Smiths* Catechism, pag. 100, to 112, but it will be hard to pick out of the whole any just account of prayer; he condemns all our praying as lifeless and formal, and the prayers of all in the Church since the Apostacy, as he and his friends are wont to say. If any one have a mind to be informed of the true nature, interest, and excellency of prayer, there is great silence in all the Quakers Writings. The light and seed within, is their all in all, and stands for all with them.

They account our prayers abominable, and meer formality, and displeasing to God, and performed from our own fleshly wills. I am certain in this, that they falsely accuse the Servants of God, and that they will find to their cost one day. If any shall think by my manner of preaching and writing,  
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because I reprehend the people of God for lukewarmness and inconstancy in prayer, in the Sermons forementioned, and detect their sin, and call it by deserving names, and charge blame generally: that therefore there is no right prayer among us, and that we be all hypocrites; let him know, that though I mean my self for one in the charge, as being conscious to my self of much guilt for lack of fervency and frequency in prayer, and doubt not, but many more sincere Christians will own the charge in a limited measure and degree; yet I am far from reckoning my self an hypocrite, or thinking that either mine own prayers, or the prayers of thousands among us, whose hearts are more sincere than mine, are rejected of God, as are the prayers of ungodly graceless ones. No, God forbid; If there be no sincere praying among the people whom the Quakers separate from, there is no sincere praying to be found in all the World. I bless God for mine own soul; and I know in my self, that though I be a most weak creature, and have cause to lye in tears and confusion before God, because of all my heinous transgressions and sins, and think my self below the weakest godly Minister in all the Land: Yet I should lye to God and against mine own soul, and be most injurious to his free-grace, should I condemn my self for a hypocrite, so far as I know mine own heart. And I know that the Ministers and People whom the Quakers do condemn, and their prayers and worship as Antichristian, and for-

formal, and sepeate from, are the precious Servants of God, the salt of the Earth, and their prayers accepted of the Lord; and there are no such defects in our prayers, as can be ground for the charge of reigning hypocrisie and ungodliness. Though I acknowledg there are multitudes among us, but they are not of us, whose lives we renounce and condemn; but so it hath been, and will be to the worlds end.

Let all that have any fear of God and regard of their salvation, and reverence for the Scripture, save themselves from that Religion which hath little or nothing of prayer in it. We know what prayer is, better than they can teach us, though we disdain not to learn from the meanest; but they must be more reformed practitioners of prayer, before they can be able spiritually, scripturally, and practically, to teach it to others. Their charging formality and hypocrisie at our door, and proclaiming themselves to be in the spirit, and to perform all spiritual prayers to God, is but the fruit of their blind perverted zeal, and a symptom of pride, and a self-deceiving heart; shew us by any rational evidences, that you are a praying people, and worship the true God by the Mediation of Jesus Christ through the grace and operation of the eternal Spirit, by supplications, and prayers, and intercessions, and giving of thanks, and humble confessions of sins, according to the laws and examples recorded in the Scriptures, and the undoubted custom and practice of  
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all Gods people to this very day, you are not able to prove : there is no such thing to be found in your books and principles published to the world, and your practice and conversation declareth to the world that you be a prayerless people.

You have this to say, That you pray at all times when the spirit moves you, and to pray without a motion from the spirit, is to go uncalled.

This later rightly understood we grant; and if you do pray when and as often as the Spirit of God moves you, you are the most praying people in the world; and we will easily grant that to pray to God without some warrant, call, or motion from the Spirit of God is not right prayer. But what do you mean by a motion from the Spirit? a voice from heaven, or an inward voice, or particular revelation and immediate call and command from God to pray? this you may never have in all your life. And if this be the motion of the spirit which you look for; it is but a tempting of God, and charging your pride, and sloth, and deadness, upon the Spirit of God. I am sure that is none of the Spirit of God which licenseth souls to live without prayer whole years together in expectation of some more than ordinary motion of the Spirit. Did you feed your bodies at that rate, and manure your fields, and follow your trades and callings in the world, I wot what would become of you. You do not

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look

look for a motion of the spirit to tell you when to plow, and sow and reap, and eat and drink, and sleep; you can tell your time for these. May not I say to you in the words of Christ, *Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky, but can ye not discern the signs of the times?* Mat. 16. 3. You need no motion of the spirit to tell you when to feed and clothe your bodies, but you need a motion from the spirit to put you upon to dress and feed your souls. In many days, yea weeks, yea months and years, you have not performed to God one holy and solemn prayer, nor spent half an hour in Communion with God, pouring out your souls to him by prayer; and instead of bewailing your sin, and reforming your impious and ungodly practice, you justify it by this, that you have had no motion of the spirit to it, which is vile hypocrisie, and a great abuse of the Spirit; for the Spirit of God doth call us to prayer at all times when the wants and necessities of our souls do suggest unto us that we should go, and we have due opportunity, and are not called off by any weightier and more instant duty, where any man hath godly and substantial reasons to put him upon to any work or duty respecting Religion or the world, that is a sufficient call from the Spirit of God. And he that will not go at this call, but looketh for I know not what motions from the spirit, will not have many motions from Gods spirit in this world, nay none at all. I think that man that hath an hard heart, a  
dead

dead soul, a guilty Conscience, lying under the wrath of God unpardoned, and every moment liable to damnation, hath a loud alarm from the spirit of God to pray for mercy and salvation night and day. If a house be on fire, we think that is a loud call to run and quench it, and call in all the aid we can: And what is sin in the soul but as the fire of hell, *Isa. 9. 18*? and we are commanded to save sinners as brands out of the fire, *Jud. 23*. And if sinners were but sensible of it, they would cry out, and amaze and startle all about them with their cries.

Perhaps the *Quakers* will say they pray continually, by the inward crys, and groans, and thirstings of their hearts; and though they do not go down upon their knees, and utter words to God, they utter inward sighs and groans to God.

We cannot know their hearts; but our Saviour hath told us, That by their fruits we must know false Prophets. And if there were the spirit of prayer within, there would be the manifestations and fruits of it without. And this is but the same defence which the carnal and ungodly in our Assemblies do make when we urge them to prayer, they say they pray continually; but when we come to reason with them about their praying and conversation, we find them to pray not at all aright. And the *Quakers* have great cause to fear that it is so with them, and that for all their seeming holiness and strictness

before the world in some things, they are inwardly unclean, and men of unholy and impenitent hearts and lives. If this admonition offend, they must thank themselves, which give the ground; while we see them to lead prayerless lives, and to make so light a matter of prayer, conceiting highly of their own states and prayers, and condemning and separating from their ancients and neighbours far holier than themselves; we cannot but greatly fear they have the same spirit of earthliness, carnality, and deadness to the things of God, which many in our Assemblies have, whom we cannot but fear to be graceless people, and bend all our studies and endeavours to win their souls to God, and a holy life. We take not upon us to know any mans heart but our own, save that Scripture and the common principles of reason and Religion do warrant us to judg of persons with a humane judgment necessary for humane converse in the world, by the evidence of their words and deeds. I could wish with all my heart for their own souls sake, that they were all godly people, and had the right spirit of grace and supplications: but leaving all secret matters to God, and meddling with nothing that is his prerogative, when the matter is fully weighed there is far more evidence against them that they are a prayerless people. In the name of God all you well-meaning people that be turned aside into crooked paths, and be hearers of *Quaker*-teachers, and resort to *Quaker*-meetings, and know  
not



not but you are in the right, soberly consider your ways, be not prayerless people, be not of a prayerless Religion, get you from among these prayerless pretenders to holiness. Call upon the Lord, as you hope to be saved; read what is here written, and soberly consider it, and break off your prayerless irreligious life, and trust not to that blind deceitful guide within you, the light within, lest it lead you into everlasting darkness. Be not deceived by your Teachers, repent and call upon God while he is near, and seek him while he may be found.

And you *Quaker* teachers, forbear any more to teach a prayerless Religion; be not profane, teach people the true nature of prayer, and the necessity of it, and the excellency of it; preach to them (if you will preach) that they repent of their prayerless life, and that they pray in their Closets and Families, lest the fury of God be poured forth upon them: Do not so grossly mislead the sheep of Jesus Christ, be tender of them; be more in prayer your selves, humble your selves before God; lay by the trade of deceiving and misleading souls, and accept the wholesome salve of repentance that your sins may be forgiven. It is evident and notorious, that true prayer is a small part of your Religion; Children are brought up prayerless, Parents are prayerless, Families are prayerless, your tables and common meals are prayerless, all or most of them as is said; how many dumb and silent meetings have you with-

out either prayer or preaching. You visit sick people, and seldom or never pray by them; all this is through you, you are their guides; a shameful and impious Religion, so much void of prayer, it argues you to be proud and self-conceited, and in deep heresie and delusion. O repent and pray God if perhaps your great wickedness may be forgiven. And if you will not pray with us, pray with one another, and set up prayer in all your Families, and be not patrons of so gross impiety against prayer and calling upon God. Take warning in time, and remember you have been warned.

And all Christian people, keep you from the ways and delusions of these men: believe them not when they say they are the Ministers of Christ, and teach people the way to Salvation. If you be Saints, you are praying people. If you will not be warned, take what comes; you will find one day that God will judg all the enemies of prayer, and will convict the *Quakers* Principles, Religion, and Conversation, of deep crimes against prayer, fathering their prayerless course of life upon his holy Spirit, and pretending and taking themselves to have the true spirit of prayer, and that all others be in the flesh, and their praying nothing but self-invention and form, and hypocrisie. Satan seeks your ruin. If you become profelytes to these men, take heed lest God in judgment forsake your understandings and consciences, and settle you in Heresie and Antichristianism,

anism, where sin and carnality shall thrive and fortifie it self by a law, and conscience shall be so seared and perverted as to make you swallow down those principles and practises which now you tremble at ; so dangerous it is to resist the Spirit of the Lord, and imprison the truth in unrighteousness, and go about to quiet and salve an ulcerous Conscience by false cures ; they may serve for a while, but the day is at hand when God will search us all ; blessed are they which shall be found upright in that day.

*Some more distinct Evidences and rational Proofs, that the Quakers are a prayerless people, living without prayer, and unacquainted with godly prayer ; with the addition of many express Texts of Scripture for their information, conviction, humiliation and amendment, and the manifesting to all that have eyes to see the gross darkness of Quakerism, and what vast difference there is in this, between Quakerism and true Christianity, and what injury they commit in fathering their Religion upon the Spirit of God, and entitling him to their darkness and impiety.*

I. **T**Heir gross blindness in the true nature of Prayer is manifested by their Books, and by discourse and conference with many professing Quakers. If they had the spirit of grace and supplications, they would shew it by their writings, which are many, and want not words, but do

evidently favour of a drunken staggering mind, big with child of blindness and error. All that are spiritual, are instructed of God, and have an understanding from him of the true nature, necessity and excellency of prayer. Let any such souls but make trial (if they doubt) by reading those places in their Books which treat of prayer, and they will perceive the truth of this allegation, as *Moderate enquiries*, p. 9. *Some principles of the Quakers* by J. Parnel, p. 77. *Smiths Catechism*, p. 100. Penn, *A new nick-name*, &c. chap. 14. p. 121. To blind souls these writings may seem divine, but to all enlightned souls they will be judged to be a darkning and perverting of Scripture-words and phrases, to establish the Idolatry of the Light within, dressed with goodly names and titles, and making it the all in all of prayer. True prayer, as it is the pouring forth of the soul to God, in penitent confessions, ardent and fervent desires and groans, and supplications, and joyful thanksgivings, smelling of an heart enlightned from above, loaden and burdened with sin, hungry after righteousness, contending with the Almighty, and contented to be any thing rather than a graceless, Christless, and unpardoned guilty soul: That prayer which is accompanied with the spirit of adoption, assimilating the soul to God, breeding humble boldness, and reverent filial approaches to God as a father, with confidence to find acceptance with the Lord through Jesus Christ, and trusting upon his perfect Mediation and Inter-

tercession, enlarging the heart, cleansing the soul, conquering sin, and bringing into the soul spiritual righteousness, peace and joy, this is the true Scripture-prayer; the *Quakers* writings are notoriously naked of any such prayer, and the discourses and conferences of their proselytes to me and others, savour of no such thing; but all their praying seems to be nothing else but a superstitious and self-devised waiting to the Light within, and feeling to that of God in them, (as *Smith* calls it, *Catechism*, p. 94. And the breathings, compunctions, and inward crys and workings of the *Quakers* soul, (which he falsely entitles the groans of the spirit, and the true prayer and supplication) are mostly but the wrestlings of a guilty smitten Conscience, writhing and turning it self, and striving by its own fleshly strength to come forth of bondage, and finds it self in chains to Satan and iniquity, and grossly imagining the Light within to be the principle of Redemption, cleansing, and Salvation, (having all power in heaven and earth in it, as saith *Smiths* Primer, I cannot cite the page at present, not having the Book) when it is nothing else but Conscience something startled, striving in its own carnal strength, without any right prayer to God, or due seeking to the Lord by Jesus Christ for conversion, peace and pardon, by whom only we can be set free from Satans yoke, the chains of lust and sin, the rebellion of wicked nature, heart-pride, and reigning deadness, and the terrors, and fears, and smitings

tings of an ulcerous Conscience, lashing the soul for sin, but no way able of it self to ease it self, save by delusion and false conceit, and so building their peace and confidence upon a lye; and all their boasting of the power of the Light, and freedom from sin, being an evil heart covered with deceit, and resting in a prayer, repentance, peace and security, not of Gods making, but the invention of a fleshly mind.

2. Their malignity against all faithful praying people, and separation from them, and disturbing godly praying souls whilst at their prayers, is another evidence that *Quakerism* and prayer agree as light and darkness. As I said before, if the spirit of grace and supplications be not in, and with those Ministers and people (excluding the hypocrites among us) whom the *Quakers* do universally separate from, and rail against, and in effect damn even all of us to hell, there will not be found to be the true spirit of grace and supplications throughout all the world; not that I think that Christ hath no true servants but in *England* and the Nations with us, I am far from thinking so; but if none be Christians but *Quakers*, or if those be not true Christians, and right praying souls which the *Quakers* do so universally condemn and separate from, I do not stick to affirm there are no right praying Christians in all the world; that they do rail against us, and separate from us, and condemn our prayers and worship as Antichristian, heretical and abomination  
to



to God, is evident by their separation from us, and setting up new Churches, and doing all they can to gain them proselytes, and all their writings abound with terms of detestation against our prayers and worship. Turn but to the places cited, which are but a small portion of what their writings abound with, and yet enough is in them to signify their contradiction and opposition to the prayers and worship of those whom they in malignity and heresie call Priests and Professors. And as for their disturbing praying souls at their work in prayer, I could multiply proofs. Read the life of Mr. *Joseph Allein*, I have not the Book by me, or I could cite the page, who being in the same prison with some *Quakers*, he and godly non-conforming brethren with him could not worship the Lord, but the *Quakers* being in a room near them in the Prison, disturbed them by noise and railing, and malignity; this was more ordinary with them at their first rising, coming into Congregations publickly, and disturbing the Minister and Congregation in the solemn worship and service of God. And I could give particular instances of *Quakers* dwelling in the same house or family, disturbing the heavenly worshippers of God in the family at their time of worship.

3. Their prayerless families are visible and apparent to the world; though I deny not but family-prayer may be so done as to be little evidenc'd to the world in some places, and by some persons

persons especially; yet the matter is notorious; it is the universal practice of all *Quakers* so far as I could ever hear, not to pray at all in their families; or if done, it is so seldom, and by so few, as will hardly amount to an exception out of the generality. I know a *Quaker* husband that will not pray with his wife, because she is not of his mind in Religion; though he hath so much of Christs spirit and Religion outwardly in him, as to pray constantly or frequently by himself, but he pleaseth not the *Quakers*, they declare their dislike of him (as I have been told by credible relation) though he go to their meetings, he cannot assent to many things among them, and useth at the hearing of their railing against faithful Ministers to go out of the meeting, and cannot brook many things among them, and they are greatly offended at him: Prayerless families they are, they do not worship God in their families, as is and hath been the constant commendable practice of Gods people, warranted by Scripture, and confirmed to the souls of the faithful by their unanswerable feeling and experience from time to time. We know that family prayer and worship, as in use among us, and contradicted by the *Quakers* and ungodly families among us, is from God; and all that condemn it, are thereby convict to be enemies of prayer, and profane families which call not upon God.

4. Their dumb and silent publick meetings is an evidence the Religion of prayer is of little regard

gard among them ; these kind of meetings are not seldom with them, and they approve them ; *Penn* calls these silent meetings a deep and silent exercise of spirit God-wards ; in which blessed communion is enjoyed, and refreshments that out-do all worldly satisfaction : *A new nickname* , pag. 126. .

5. Their grand principle of the Light within is not consistent with right prayer ; for their principle is, That every man hath a Light within him, which is eminently a Christians rule, because of its present, immediate and certain direction and knowledg, and the Scripture at most but a kind of declaratory and secondary rule ; *Penn's Reason against railing* , pag. 40. In a word, their principal writers, *Pen*, *Whitehead*, *Fox*, *Burroughs*, *Smith*, and others make the Light within more than a creature or created light, they make it God and Christ, they make it full of all wisdom, goodness, power, unchangeable in light, and life, and love, having all power in heaven and earth in it. If so, what need any man pray ? I shall in another writing to come forth quickly, for ought I know, prove by plentiful citations out of the *Quakers* Writings, all this, and much more, affirmed by them of the Light within. It is in vain to pray if every man have such an all-sufficient and self-sufficient principle within him, call it by what name you will.

6. I know some that once were *Quakers*, and now are turned to be of us, and are one with the truth, and they do lament their former darkness and

and delusion, and plainly see that they were misled, and were in error, and did not pray while they were *Quakers*, nor durst nor could, as now they do; and they are established in the truth, and are constant in Closet-prayer, and Family-prayer, and in private and publick with the Lords Ministers and people; and they are delivered from all those fears and chains, and bonds, and dissatisfaction, and soul-anguish which they were in, and groaned under while they were *Quakers*, and strove and laboured, and used all possible means to attain to quiet and peace of Conscience in the *Quakers* way, and could not; but were brought even to the brink of death and despair, and could no way ease their souls, but by returning to us, and to prayer and communion with us, and now they have joy and peace, and assurance, and are satisfied in their souls, and lead sober, and righteous, and godly lives, and are most zealous for prayer, and are envied and maligned by the *Quakers*; such I do know, and they know that I say the truth.

7. Let persons be in never so great extremity, as sick and dying persons, women with child, and troubled Consciences, melancholy and distracted ones, I never heard or read any prayers at all made unto God for them by any *Quaker*, though they were their own proselytes. But I have been credibly told of some sick relenting *Quakers* upon their death-beds, who have desired the prayers of godly praying persons among us, and their  
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relations being *Quakers* have hindered, and would not pray themselves, nor did any *Quaker* pray with them, nor do they use to pray with one another, though they frequently meet, and visit sick profelytes and friends (as they call one another) they do not pray themselves, nor are they willing that any of us shall come to their friends and pray by them, and instruct and help them by prayer. If they would not suffer us to pray with them, they might pray themselves, either they cannot pray, or if they can and will not, they are the more to be blamed as void of Christian compassion, which would compell them to pray to God for sick and dying persons, and such as be in extremity; this doth evidence that they are no people of prayer, and make no use of prayer. For if ever people pray, they will do it in misery and extremity, *Hof. 5. ult.*

8. It is scarce possible that a through-*Quaker* should be a praying Christian, or a right Christian at all. By a through-*Quaker* I mean one that holds the Light within to be God and Christ, and above the Scriptures; such be their Captains and foreleaders, who so maintain by their writings, and avow and defend for their chief principle, and the soul and life of all their Religion. Such an opinion is rank blasphemy, and how such an opinion should dwell in the breast of a praying gracious soul, is beyond rational charity to conceive, where the opinion takes hold of the heart, and enters into the soul, and engageth the

the heart and life as it doth in all appearance in many of them, who manifest no less by their blind zeal in writing, preaching, and always to prostitute souls to the Light within, the *Quakers* Dragon, in blasphemy of the true God and Christ.

9. Their great talk of Perfection, and railing at us for denying a sinless perfection by just warrant of Scripture, and the experience of all faithful souls, is a strong sign that they are grossly proud, and self-ignorant, and know nothing of true prayer. If they had the spirit of grace and supplications in them, they would talk at another rate, they would be more upon their knees, confessing their great wants and imperfections, and understand themselves and perfection better, before they affirm so confidently, and slander us so malignantly, concerning this matter. I cannot but here detect the *Quakers* gross hypocrisie, who insinuate into the minds of people, that we teach loose Doctrines, and lead people to sin, by denying the Doctrine of sinless perfection to Saints in this life, and that they are most holy and pure teachers; when as it is known and evident, That the ground why we are hated and opposed by all sorts of ungodly ones, is because we teach such pure and clean Doctrine, and open to sinners the nature and necessity of Regeneration, Repentance, Heavenly-mindedness, living by Faith, and the power of Godliness; these Truths we teach and press upon souls, and therefore they cannot endure us, but express the same spirit of rancor,  
and



and persecution and malignity against the truth and its followers, with the *Quakers*; and many of them turn *Quakers* and *Papists*, and go where they can hear soothing teachers, and flesh-pleasing Doctrines; and yet the *Quakers* would blind the world that we teach licentious Doctrines, when it is notorious, and I could bring many that will not endure such Preachers as I, and multitudes may not be permitted to preach publicly, and we can preach in no place, but Satan by one or other is seeking to hinder us, and particularly I was hindered and denied to preach the two Sermons herewith annexed at the place appointed; and the bottom cause of all is because we teach clean Scripture-doctrine, such as mens lusts will not abide; and yet do *Quakers* slander us to the world as patrons of sin, and preachers of impiety, because we deny a difference between a glorified Saint in heaven, and an imperfect perfect Saint on earth. We maintain a perfection such as agreeth to a Saint on earth, but not such as we shall have in heaven. Their contradicting what we hold, is evidently false, and a Doctrine which leadeth to despair, and is no better than a talking wickedly for God and Christ, and Holiness, undermining these, while in pretence and appearance they seem to be most for them; but had they but a praying-spirit in them, and right self-acquaintance, they would be more humble, and not make a derision of the sober and penitent confessions

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essions of humble praying souls among us; prayer would teach them to know themselves better, and be more in self-humbling and soul-afflicting, and self-judging exercises, confession and prayer. This is a great sign they are none of those which are worshippers of the true God by prayer; to talk of sinless perfection, argues much unacquaintance with prayer; though Jesus Christ prayed, yet in that he was spotless and perfect beyond all humane attainments, he had other reasons and motives to prayer than we, and was not obliged to it upon those grounds that we are. *Penn* will yield, and his friends the *Quakers* (*Treatise of Oaths*, p. 12.) *Lessante ratione legis, lessat lex*, Christ having no sin and soul-wants as we have, the law of prayer could not oblige him as it doth us; it was from his own voluntary susception and undertaking that he became subject to the Law; but we be all needy wanting creatures, defiled with sin, and guilty before God, by nature and Christianity doubly obliged to pray; were we perfectly perfect there would be no need of prayer; their asserting of such a perfection bewrayeth them to be self-ignorant, prayerless souls, knowing nothing by heart-knowledg and experience, what true prayer is.

10. If report be true, when they do pray (for I have heard and believe that sometimes they pray) their praying hath nothing of confession of sin, and begging forgiveness of sin. I am sure such prayer is not Gospel-prayer, no more than a man

is a true man without a head or heart: Confession and petition of forgiveness, are principal parts of prayer. They are in their own esteem marvellous pure this while, if the report be true, which I do not maintain, but deliver it as famed and credibly reported, and there is much presumption to believe it.

11. It is common and customary (with many of them at least) at their meals to give no thanks, neither before nor after; and of those that give thanks, I think it is not constantly, and I question whether any of them give thanks at all after meat.

12. This is their great assertion, That prayer is not to be done without the motion of the Light within; this *Penn* doth expressly own to be the *Quakers* faith, *A new nickname*, &c. p. 122. I have discoursed with some of them, who have confessed to me that they never pray without a motion from the spirit, and that in many years they have not had any motion to prayer. I am certain this is none of Christs spirit. That spirit that will let them live whole years without prayer, if it be true to its principles, will permit them to live all their days without prayer. I dare appeal to the *Quakers* themselves, if in many years time they have had one such motion to prayer as they take to be a warrantable motion; this Light within they blasphemously call the holy spirit, and so father their gross impiety and irreligion upon God; they dare not pray without a

motion from the Light within, lest they should  
 run in their own strength. Ah hypocrites ! Is  
 this your tender respect to the spirit, to live  
 whole years without prayer, to wait for moti-  
 ons and inspirations, and revelations, and account  
 it will-worship and impiety to imitate *David*,  
*Daniel*, *Cornelius*, all praying Saints, in frequent  
 prayers? The Spirit of God in Scripture-times  
 was wont to move the Saints to daily frequent  
 prayer, so it moveth us and all praying Saints.  
 We are sure that spirit that contradicteth and  
 overthroweth himself and his own kingdom, can-  
 not be of God; your light and spirit moveth  
 not to prayer but when you will, and when you  
 shall so fancy. Goodly praying ! you say you  
 pray when the spirit would have you; but in-  
 deed it is not so, for you pray but when you  
 will, and when your heart shall put you upon it.  
 For the Spirit and the Scripture agree in one;  
 and Scripture bids us to be imitators of Christ  
 and the Saints, to pray without ceasing; which  
 can import no less than that we embrace all op-  
 portunities of prayer, and calls to prayer; and  
 that is not when we will, but when the Lord  
 will; and the Lord would have us to pray fre-  
 quently, to pray for our daily bread, and for-  
 giveness of sin; to pray as often as we have god-  
 ly reasons to pray, to walk with God by prayer,  
 to abound in prayer, to feed our souls by daily  
 prayer. Certainly you are no praying people  
 which depend upon such motions to prayer as a

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man may live a thousand years, and never have: if one year, why not two, why not ten, why not more? there's death in that soul, whose soul doth not constrain him to earnest frequent prayer. It is error, pride and sloth, and guilt, which bung up the mouth of the soul from prayer so long together, and that too justified as godly and most pleasing to God,

13. The *Quakers* in this seem to be the same with many impious, ungodly, prayerless persons and families among us, who have all the symptoms of death and carnality upon them; yet many among us that do not pray, they will commend and praise those that do pray, and will confess that they should pray; but we cannot for our lives get them to pray, not so much as outwardly. What difference in this between a prayerless drunkard, and a prayerless *Quaker*? a prayerless worldling, and wanton, and swearer, and a prayerless *Quaker*? the *Quakers* say people are not to pray till they have a motion from the Light within; I dare say, let the Light within alone, and say nothing to it, and it shall never move any *Quaker*, or ungodly soul to pray till death, and the flames of hell shall awake them; there are many among us, some swearers, some drunkards, some worldlings, some proud, some persecutors, some railers, some sensualists and unclean, but yet in this they all agree that they are prayerless, impenitent souls. So though the *Quakers* differ in many things from these people, in

this they agree, that they are both prayerless, they call not upon God. Some among us are ignorant and know not how to call upon God, such also are many *Quakers*; put them to pray, and I dare be bold to say they have no knowledg and skill to call upon God, it is apparent by conference with them, resting in the Light within, and living manifestly in the lusts of ignorance; what is it that keeps ungodly souls from prayer? the same, setting aside their error, keeps the *Quakers* from prayer. I'll tell what keeps me from prayer, when my Conscience and the Light within moves me to prayer, my sloth and laziness, my deadness, want of life and hunger, and spirit in my soul, and a sense of death and judgment, and eternity; if I shall go to prayer as often as I am moved, and should pray according to the convictions of my Conscience, O how much more frequent and instant should I be in prayer! I should go to my relations, people, and neighbours, and every day spend many hours in weeping, and prayers, and supplications for my self and all sorts throughout the world. I am sure a pure and tender Conscience can no more live without daily constant fervent prayer, than a fish can live out of the water, or nature can subsist without air, and food, and sleep, and clothes. If the *Quakers* take themselves to be eminent singular Saints in this, they must have for their fellows (like to like) the fleshly and profane, and ungodly ones among us, whom we cannot but pity, and our hearts bleed



bleed and mourn for them night and day, as lost souls, living without God, without Christ, without prayer in the world. We have within us a fleshly part, though it do not reign as it doth in the ungodly; so far as the flesh and carnality is in us, it is full of all manner of fleshly reasons against prayer, and is the great enemy of prayer, keeping us from prayer, deadning us in prayer, corrupting our prayers, hating spiritual constant fervent prayer as the most sin-killing duty in the world; and the *Quakers* could hardly devise a more flesh-pleasing Doctrine than never to pray without a motion from the Light within; for in all impenitent ones the darkness is stronger than the light, and the stronger party will have the casting-vote, and all must be as the ruling principle shall say. For though the Light may move, yet it will be but a weak motion, and the motion of the darkness, or fleshly part will overcome and drown the light, and bring it under habitually; and thence it is that carnal souls can be so secure in sin, and sleep each day and hour over damnation; and that which should move them to prayer, the Light within, is overpowered by the darkness, and so an impenitent soul, a *Quaker*, or any other, may live a secure flesh-pleasing life all his days, and never have one effectual motion to prayer, if he be ruled by the Light within, and rest in that; but when Regeneration comes into the soul, then the case is altered, there is put into the soul a spirit of grace

and supplications, the light then prevails habitually. and there is a kind of continual exercise of the soul by internal prayer, and a daily frequent putting on to solemn stated prayer, except it be in case of some gross sin stunning the Conscience for the present, or unusual deadness and lethargy upon the soul: saving these cases, the heart of a Saint is full of holy motions to prayer; and besides continual mental ejaculations, doth put on and incite the soul to stated solemn prayer, day by day, secretly, privately and publicly, through the constant renewings and communications of the spirits help to the soul.

14. The *Quakers* hypocrisie is so evident in many things that we are justly warranted to fear and suspect either that they do not pray at all, or but the prayers of hypocrites. To instance in all the particulars of their hypocrisie would not be convenient here. I mean to make it a particular subject by it self, having two Sermons by me of hypocrisie, which I purpose for ought I know as soon as I can have time to publish with rational evidences and instances, that *Quakerism* at the bottom is meer and rank hypocrisie. At present I shall give this one instance, *Mat. 23.* it is there made a mark and practise of hypocrites to admire and commend, and praise dead Saints and Martyrs, and to hate and persecute, and condemn, and separate from living Saints; this is evident in the *Quakers*: *Penn* in the name of them all doth profess high esteem of the *English* Martyrs, and first  
Re-

Reformers of Religion from the superstitions and idolatries of Popery; *Truth exalted*, p. 6. But now we that be of the same Faith and Religion with the Martyrs, and have the same spirit of grace and supplications, the same Scriptures, the same Creed, the same Baptism and Lords Supper, the same Communion of Saints, and persist in the same truth and godliness, against all superstition, heresie and Popery, and are equally detested by *Papists*, as were the Martyrs and first Reformers; the *Quakers* join with *Papists*, and lay most grievous crimes to our charge, as the vilest people in the world; these are his words, *Quakerism a new nickname*, &c. p. 165. — In the earth there is not any thing so fantastical, conceited, proud, railing, busie-body, and sometimes ignorant, as a sort of Priests to me not unknown, who think their coat will bear out their worst expressions for Religion, and practise an haughty reviling for Christ, as one of the greatest demonstrations of their zeal; an ill-bred and pedantick crew, the bane of reason, and pest of the world, the old incendiaries to mischief, and the best to be spar'd of mankind; against whom the boiling vengeance of an irritated God is ready to be poured out to the destruction of such, if they repent not, and turn from their abominable deceits. —

Lord forgive him, he knows not what he says: It is past my power to convince such twice hardened Consciences. It is manifest to all impartial observers, that we are of the Martyrs Religion,  
spirit,

spirit, and conversation. The *Quakers* praise and commend them, they utterly condemn us, they make us as dead unfavoury salt, good for nothing but to be abominated by all ; this is rank and gross hypocrisie. We join them in this with *Papists*, who are great admirers of dead Saints, and kill and persecute the living ; and though the *Quakers* do not kill us, they do by their Books and Principles send us all to Hell. *Qui conveniunt in aliquo tertio, conveniunt inter se*. The same spirit that reigns in the one is in the other. They declare themselves to be hypocrites, and therefore if they pray at all, we may fear their prayers are animated with hypocrisie and a spirit of pride and malignity.

15. So prime and pure a part of Religion as prayer, were it in them as it is in real Saints, could not be hid, but would be conspicuous to the world, as it hath ever been, and is still at this day among all faithful souls.

16. For though the soul and heart of prayer be within, and seen only to God and those that pray ; yet the tongue and members have their part in all publick prayers, and prayer with others ; and where there is no external prayer in such cases, there is no due and regular prayer, for we are to pray with the spirit and with the understanding also, that the people may be edified, and those which join may say, *Amen*. Our Divines do justly write against the *Papists* for having Gods worship in the *Latine* tongue, and per-  
forming

forming it so as the people cannot understand what it means. And in this *Quakerism* doth symbolize with *Popery*, by sticking in internal conceited prayer, and abolishing the right use of our tongues, and bodily service in the worship of God, in conjunction with the spirit and internal part; there is no opposition between internal and external prayer, nor do they constitute two species or different sorts of prayer, no more than the inward and outward man do constitute two men, for both soul and body do make but one entire man. And so external and internal prayer do make but one entire prayer; and where we are to pray with others, external prayer is requisite, which seems to be little in use or practise with the *Quakers*.

And for proof hereof, and the right understanding of prayer, I send them to the Sermons aforesaid, to which I shall here add a Catalogue of pure Scriptures promiscuously and without any order or method, that from Gods own mouth, they and all that have eyes to see may learn and understand the necessity and excellency of prayer, and the great esteem and veneration which is due to prayer, and of how great interest and account it is in the saving Religion of Jesus Christ. Let Protestants as well as *Quakers* see to themselves, and each take warning to their own souls.

*Psal. 53. 4, Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread: they have not called upon God.*

*Job 21. 14, 15, They say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways; what is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have if we call upon his name?*

*1 Sam. 12. 23, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord, in ceasing to pray for you.*

*Job 27. 10, Will the hypocrite delight himself in the Almighty? will he always call upon God?*

*Job 15. 4, Thou castest off fear, and restrainest prayer before God.*

*Jer. 10. 25, Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name; for they have eaten up Jacob, and devoured him, and consumed him, and have made his habitation desolate. The like also, *Psal. 79. 6, 7.**

*Isa. 55. 6. Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near.*

*Hos. 5. 15, I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face; in their affliction they will seek me early.*

*Prov. 15. 8, The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but the prayer of the upright is his delight.*

*1 Tim. 2. 8, I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting.*

*1 Thes. 5. 17, Pray without ceasing.*

*Col. 4. 2. Continue in prayer, and watch in the same*



same with thanksgiving Ver. 3, Withall, praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of interance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bands. Ver. 4, That I may make it manifest as I ought to speak. Ver. 12, Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteeth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and compleat in all the will of God.

Phil. 4. 6, 7, Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God; and the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Ephes. 6. 18, 19, Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseveranee, and supplication for all Saints, and for me.

1 Pet. 3. 12, The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers.

Mar. 9. 28, 29. And when Jesus was come into the house, his discip'les asked him privately, why could not we cast him [the dumb spirit] out? and he said unto them, this kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting. Mat. 26. 41. Luk. 22. 40. Mark 14. 38, Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

Zach. 12. 10, I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitter

*bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.*

*Act. 1. 14, The Apostles all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. Ver. 24, and they prayed and said, Thou Lord, &c.*

*Act. 3. 1, Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour.*

*Act. 4. 24, They lift up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, &c. Ver. 31. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.*

*Act. 6. 4, We will give our selves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.*

*The Saints are described by such as call on the name of the Lord, Act. 9. 14, 22. 1 Cor. 1. 2.*

*Act. 9. 11, Enquire for one called Saul of Tarsus; for behold, he prayeth.*

*Act. 22. 16, Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.*

*Act. 7. 59, 60, And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord lay not this sin to their charge.*

*Act 9. 40, Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down and prayed, and turning him to the body, said, Tabitha arise, and she opened her eyes; when she saw Peter, she sat up.*

*Act. 10. 1, 2, Cornelius a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms*

to the people, and prayed to God alway. V.4. 31, Thy prayers & thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. Ver. 30, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour, and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing. Ver. 9, Peter went up upon the house-top to pray, about the sixth hour.

1 Tim. 5. 5, She that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day.

Luk. 2. 36, 37, Anna a widow of above fourscore and four years, departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.

Luk. 21. 36, Watch ye therefore, and pray alway, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things which shall come to pass, and to stand before the son of man.

Jam. 1. 5, If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

Jam. 5. 13, Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Ver. 14, Is any sick among you? let him send for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him. Ver. 15, And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Ver. 16, The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Ver. 17, Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

Ver.

Ver. 18. *And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.*

Rom. 8.26,27, *The spirit helpeth our infirmities ; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought ; but the spirit it self maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of the spirit, because he maketh intercession for the Saints, according to the will of God.*

Dan. 9. 3, 4, &c. *I set my face unto the Lord God to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. And I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, &c. V. 20, And whiles I was speaking and praying, and confessing my sin, and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God, for the holy mountain of my God. V. 21, 22, 23. Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel touched me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, at the beginning of thy supplication the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee ; for thou art greatly beloved.*

Mar. 11. 17, *My house shall be called of all Nations the house of prayer.*

Psal. 50. 15, *Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorifie me.*

Revel 5. 8, *The four Beasts, and four and twenty Elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of Saints.*

Revel. 8. 3, 4, *An Angel came and stood at the altar,*

altar, having a golden censor, and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all Saints upon the golden altar, which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the Saints, ascended up before God out of the Angels hand.

Luk. 18, Jesus spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint. Ver. 7, Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

But I cannot stay to write out more at large. I shall turn you to places of Scripture concerning prayer, well worthy of perusal. *Act. 8. 22. Mat. 6. 6. Mat. 7. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. Luk. 11. 1, 2, and so on to v. 14. Gen. 4. 26. Gen. 18. 23, to the end. Gen. 19. 18, 19, 20, 21, 29. Gen. 32. 24, &c. compared with Hof. 12. 4. Psal. 109. 4. Psal. 102, title. & v. 17, 18. Psal. 32. 6. Joh. 14. 13, 14. Joh. 16. 23, 24. Rom. 12. 12. 1 Tim. 2. 1, 2, 3. 1 Joh. 5. 14, 15. Jud. 20. Heb. 13. 18. Heb. 5. 7. Luk. 3. 21, 22. Luk. 9. 29. Mar. 1. 35. Luk. 22. 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46. Mar. 14. 32, to 40. Mat. 26. 39, to 45. Luk. 6. 12. Act. 2. 42. 1 Pet. 3. 7. 1 Thes. 3. 10. Act. 12. 5, 12. Act. 16. 13, 16. 1 Tim. 4. 5. 1 Pet. 4. 7. Phil. 1. 4, 19. Rom. 10. 13. Act. 2. 21. Exod. 17. 11, 12. 1 Chron. 4. 10. 1 Cor. 7. 5. 2 Cor. 1. 11. Exod. 32. 10, 11, &c. Isa. 45. 19. Isa. 45. 11. Isa. 65. 24. Isa. 26. 8, 9.*

*Excitations to fervency in prayer, and expostulations with my soul touching my deadness and coldness in prayer, and manifold defects in prayer.*

**W**hen blind *Bartimeus* heard that it was *Jesus* which passed by, he mattered not all the throng of people, but cried out, *Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And when the people bade him hold his peace, he cried out the more a great deal, Jesus thou Son of David have mercy on me.* He was blind, so were not they; he felt and knew better what it was to be without eye-sight than they did, and that made him not to regard their charge to hold his peace. Hunger and cold, and thirst, and nakedness, and want, and indigency, and pain, and grief, are the best instructors and monitors to prayer. Every thing in pain and extremity will cry out. *The ravens cry for food, and the Lord heareth them. The hungry lions rore for prey, and seek their meat from God. The earth by long drought being chapt and dry, cleaveth and maketh chinks, and gapeth for rain, and showers from above. Women in travel cannot refrain when their pangs come, they burst forth into crys. The burdened creature groaneth to be delivered from its bondage. Rachel being able to hold no longer, breaks forth in crys to her Husband as unto God, Give me children, or I die. Jacob being in fear of his life, how earnest is he in prayer? Sampson being ready to perish through thirst, yet strained himself*



self to pray almost beyond his strength, for water to sustain and fetch back his life. And Christ himself at the approach of death, and the bitter cup he was to drink, being smitten with innocent sense and fore-apprehension of most grievous soul-afflicting pains at hand, prays three times to his Father, and that with strong crying and tears; and being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat in the cold night, was as it were great drops of blood, falling to the ground, and an Angel was sent to strengthen him.

Hadst thou, O my soul, but a right sense of God, and sin, and eternal things, thou couldst not but be eloquent and copious, and fervent in prayer. Thou prayest, but how? exceeding coldly. *Jonas* did not pray so when he was in the Whales belly. The thief upon the Cross did not pray so when he was entreating for his soul and life for ever. *Paul* did not pray so when he was in the pangs of the new birth, and the spirit of grace and supplications was new given him. *Jacob* did not pray so when he wept and made supplications to God, and made answer to the Angel requesting, *Let me go: I will not let thee go till thou hast blessed me.* If I were famished, could I pray no more eagerly and hungrily for food? If I were condemned to die, could I beg no harder for my life? If I were in pain and torture, could I be so indifferent for ease? If I were thirsty, how greedy should I be of drink? what is the cause that I am not as instant for my soul as for my body? Are not the

wants of my soul as real, and far more great? my Saviour hath told me, *Seek first the kingdom of heaven and the righteousness thereof, and labour not for the food which perisheth, but for that which endureth to eternal life.* I am sure I have far greater reason to be instant and importunate with God night and day in every prayer I make to God for the forgiveness of sin past, for grace to subdue remaining sin, for the continual favour of God, for wisdom, holiness and power to obey the commands of God, than I or any the most indigent man in the world can have reason to beg for his temporal life, and corporal ease and health, and mercy to the body and outward man merely as such. Is not my soul most precious? Is not God most holy, great and jealous? Is not sin most hainous? Is not sin within me? doth it not dwell in me? doth it not stick in my bowels? hath it not gotten into my heart? hath it not poysoned and infected my nature? hath it not long consumed the vitals of my soul? hath it not almost undone me, almost been my everlasting ruin, almost made me past all hope and help, and cure? and shall I pray against this as if I prayed not? shall I make God an Idol? shall I mock the Almighty? shall I pray, Lord do not grant me my request, do not kill my sins, do not make me holy, do not save me from hell, do not bless me with thy grace and favour, do not root up these vices of my heart? shall I beg one thing with my tongue, and another thing with my heart? shall I dissemble with

with God, and kill my soul, and add to my sin, and aggravate my condemnation in hell by cold hypocritical and dead praying? what is the import of those words of Christ, *Ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you?* Do not these plainly import a vehemency and contention of spirit in prayer, taking the Kingdom of Heaven by violence, and striving to take it as by storm. James saith, *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much*; not unless it be fervent and effectual. If I be double-minded, wavering and indifferent whether God hear me or no, I must not think to receive any thing from the Lord. The promise is not to all that pray, but to all that pray in faith. And faith will tell me that God is to be called upon with all my might, that everlasting glory cannot be bought too dear, that everlasting torments be unmeasurable; if I pray not to be saved from these, what will I pray for? Have I ever got any thing by cold, and dead, and heartless praying? Have I gained what I sought for? have I obtained reward and blessing from God? hath not Conscience smitten me exceedingly? hath not my soul languished? hath not sin remained strong as ever, and rather stronger? hath not my heart been cold? have I not felt a manifest loss and want in all my conversation? have I not gone with guilt and shame in my face, and sorrow in my eyes, and groans in my heart, far unlike to

my self at other times, when my heart hath been  
 lifted up in prayer. Alas ! I am just nothing  
 when I am cold and idle in prayer ; I am weak  
 within, and defective and disorderly without ;  
 all that converse with me may soon perceive I  
 have been little in prayer, I can do nothing as I  
 should do, I am idle and listless in all, I do but  
 trifle and bungle, and my understanding is dark  
 and confused, my heart is hard, I am stopt and  
 straitned within, and till the Lord loosen and  
 enlarge me, and give me vent in prayer, and set  
 my heart afloat again, I am sadly weak. O what  
 if death should come upon me in any of these  
 sick fits, sin-fits I may call them, winter-nights  
 to my soul, wasting my strength, bringing me  
 low ! O how well is it with my soul when I can  
 find and feel my heart in prayer ! how nothing is  
 the world in mine eyes, how tender is Conscience,  
 how odious is sin, how strong are my resolutions,  
 what ground have I against Satan ! I  
 am taller by the head and shoulders than all my  
 lusts, than all mine enemies ; I master all my difficulties,  
 my courage is invincible, my hope impregnable,  
 my charity fervent, my heart clean and pure within,  
 my affections calm and regular, my understanding full of heavenly notions,  
 my lips are ready to pour forth heart-warming and heart-melting discourses to all I meet with ; I can  
 find some good matter to talk of, and be prompt,  
 and put on boldness where ever I come : though  
 the world account it folly, my own heart feelingly

ingly confutes their censure, and convinces me beyond doubt, speak on for God and eternal life, and be not silent.

Ah foolish soul ! that art so backward to, and inconstant and cold in this soul-enriching duty ! O what have I lost to my self and others when I have lost a little time in prayer ! how doth Satan watch when I omit prayer, when I do it by the halves, and makes no small advantage of it ? when will I pray if not now ? is there not a loud call to prayer ? is not sin and judgment, iniquity and calamity an alarm to prayer, who shall pray if I and such as I do not pray, whose office it is to pray ?

O my God ! forgive me all my omissions of prayer, all my coldness, deadness, lukewarmness, and distractions in prayer. O charge not upon me my many defects uttered to thy holy Majesty in prayer. O who is sufficient for this thing ? O teach me by thy spirit to pray ; help my infirmities at all times in prayer. Circumcise my lips, load me with the sense of my many and great wants ; give me always to pray in faith, to lift up pure hands without wrath or doubting ; let me be sincere, humble and affectionate, pouring out my soul unto thee. O increase in me wisdom and understanding to pray ; make me skilful, teach me to plead with thee in prayer ; never forsake me in prayer, compell me, and prepare me to it, be with me in it, and uphold my heart in a praying thankful frame between prayer and prayer,

that I may always be lively, and spiritual, and broken, and tender hearted in prayer; and help me to wait patiently for all the returns of prayer; and I thank thee O my dear God for all thy grace and mercy to my soul in prayer. How precious are the thoughts thereof unto me! how great is the sum of them!

O what need is there of some to stand in the gap! Sin and judgment are never far asunder. The whole Christian world groaneth under the weight of sin. *It is of the Lords mercies that we are not consumed, and because his compassions fail not.* Jesus Christ hath purchased for his Saints access with boldness into the Lords presence. I have leave to come at all times. I may tell the Lord my whole heart. If I pray aright I am sure to be heard; shall not I pray who have an Intercessor for me in heaven? shall I not do it at all because I cannot do it as I would? Be but ingenuous, penitent and sincere, and the Lord will be gracious to me, and both accept and help me; now is my praying-time, now my soul, or never. Shortly I must die and pass into eternity, where is no more time for prayer. In heaven all are happy. In hell it is in vain to cry, Lord have mercy on me.

O how would any of these wretches pray and preach were they in my stead? how would they pour forth their souls to God, and weep and pray, and trickle down showres of tears. O what a plague is infidelity and a hard heart! Thou dost not see, my soul, believe that there is another world,



world, that there is any other life but this. O how can I believe eternity, and be so dead and cold in prayer ! O how can I say, I believe all that the Scripture says concerning sin and grace, heaven and hell, God and the creature, time and eternity, and be no more powerful in prayer ? who hath taught us to be so distracted and heartless in this service of God ? canst thou watch and govern my self without prayer ? watching sever'd from prayer is not the watching prescribed by God : as prayer alone without watching is but hypocrisie and a mocking of God, so watching without prayer is but waking idleness, and a way of Satans contrivement to undermine my soul, and supplant my faith. Covet to be a man of prayer ; be ambitious to be eminent in prayer ; study the nature, the reasons, and excellency of prayer, and inculcate prayer much to all my people. There are thousands and millions of poor sinners in the World, Jews, and Gentiles, and carnal Christians, whom I am never like to see, or afford any help to. Pray for them, pray for them, and again I say, pray and fast, and pray for them. The times are evil, take occasion thence to be more in prayer ; Honour my God by prayer : walk with him by prayer : play not the hypocrite when I am upon my knees ; take not the name of God in vain. *Scanderbeg* the Christian Warriour fought so earnestly, that the blood  
came

came out of his mouth; O be thou zealous in prayer. Thou art contending with the Almighty, thou art waging War with Satan, and all the powers of Earth and Hell; thou art combating with my lusts. O be valiant in prayer, my soul, be courageous, and the Lord will be with me. Thou art praying for the greatest matters in the World. If I speed not, I am undone; every prayer I make is of more weight to my soul than the winning of a Kingdom. What so precious, as pardon, grace, and peace? would I not be a man of Wisdom, Holiness, and Zeal, compleat in all the Will of God? Is not that the thing in mine eye, and most upon my heart, that I may be stedfast and unmovable, alwayes abounding in the work of the Lord? Why then my soul, be a wrestler in prayer, pray with strong crying and tears. Here is work for thee. Here thou art called to fighting. Here are no knotty controversies, and intricate disputes, and tedious arguing. Thou hast to do with God in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ through the Holy Ghost. Thou hast to do with him alone; thou mayst fill my mouth with Arguments, thou mayst freely tell him of all my grievances; thou hast leave to pray for all things profitable, good and convenient. Thou needest not to fear the weakness or insufficiency of God. *Open my mouth wide, and the Lord will fill me.* Should it not delight my soul to be in holy familiar converse with God? O that I had but a heart for prayer! O that the

the Lord would pour upon me the spirit of grace and supplications. O that I had but my wish in prayer, thou shouldst soon see, O Satan, that faith and prayer are mighty things through God, down should all my lusts come; I would set my feet in the neck of them all, and go from prayer in the strength of the Lord more than Conqueror. Bat alas, my hands are feeble in prayer, my knees are weak, I go to it with small delight, often do I compel my self to it, opportunity waiting, necessity driving, and Conscience commanding. I am distracted in it, I am soon weary, I come poorly off, my foes are too hard for me. O Lord why is it thus with me? why go I mourning all the day long, when the comforter which should relieve my soul is gone from me? why withdrawest thou thy self, and leavest me to do a work of the greatest difficulty and importance with little aid from above? why do I seek thee sorrowing, and look, and long with wishly expectations for thy return to my soul? why shall mine enemies, yea thine rather prevail? Thou knowest that I am thine, and not mine own; thy name is nam'd upon me. Thy glory must needs be dear to thee, as my salvation is dear to me. Is it not for thy glory that I hallow thy name, and promote thy kingdom, and do thy will in the world? O grant me my request, let me have the thing which I have so frequently beg'd. I know dear God, the fault is wholly in me; far be it from me to judg my  
Ma-

Maker, and put off my faults to the most high.  
 I acknowledg thine abundant mercy; how pre-  
 cious are thy thoughts unto me, O God: how  
 great is the sum of them? although my heart  
 be not so with thee as I could wish it were,  
 yet hast thou made with me an everlasting Co-  
 venant, ordered in all things and sure, and in  
 this be bound up all my sweetest consolations,  
 this is all my hope and joy. I am comforted in  
 thee my sweetest Saviour. *Thou shalt guide me  
 with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me unto  
 glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there  
 is none on earth that I can desire besides thee.* Hold  
 out faith and patience but a while, and my groans  
 and sighs will be at an end, and prayer will be  
 turned into praise, and fasting and mourning in-  
 to celestial feasting and joy; multitudes are gone  
 before who once were as low, as weak, as raw, as  
 imperfect as I. They got not thither by them-  
 selves meerly or chiefly. The Lord, the everlast-  
 ing God, the author and finisher of faith, hath  
 safely landed them ashore the celestial haven.  
 Their God is my God, the same Lord Jesus is  
 mine, the same eternal spirit of grace and peace  
 is with me. I am passed through the Red sea.  
*Egypt* is behind me. I am escaped out of *Sodom*,  
 I am from under the bondage of spiritual *Pharaoh*  
 the Devil, who once was my father and master.  
 I am upon my march towards the Cœlestial Coun-  
 try, the pleasant land, the City which hath foun-  
 dations, whose builder and maker is God. I  
 meet

meet with *Amaleck* in the way, fiery scorpions, spiritual adversaries, daily encounters; but the Lord is with me, and he shall deliver me from all my fears, and shall preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom; to him be glory for ever, *Amen*.

But yet my soul is much sadden'd and cast down when I consider what striving and fighting there is in my prayer against it self. One part in me would be more holy, and another part contradicteth and would be as I am, and have leave to be unholy. One side is for God and for heaven, and the other side savoureth earth, and is all for the flesh, and grudgeth every painful sigh for heaven. O how is my soul tossed between these two contenders, and I am compelled to pray hypocritically, and dissemble with God, and utter untruths to him that searcheth the hearts, and delighteth not but in upright lips. But either it must be so in part, or there will be no praying in this world; no man in this world is so all spirit, but withal he is in part flesh, and so much flesh, so much carnal mixture in prayer. The spirit is often willing when the flesh is weak. Nevertheless it is good for me to draw near to God. Groaning and sighs are not rejected by the Lord when coming from a renewed soul, and offered up unto him in the spirit. I say as *David*, if I shall find favour in his sight, he will be with me in prayer, he will multiply my oil, he will add to my stature, he will better me in prayer; if not, lo here I am, let him do whatsoever seemeth

eth good in his sight. Lord, when I cannot do better my self, give me to be thankful for that I am and can, and to rejoyce in those that excell. Thy favour to me is not made less by thy greater favours to others. Let me aim at the highest pitch of grace, and be emulous to love thee, and do thee service above others; but grant me humility, thankfulness and sincerity, and with my smaller talents teach me to do thee service within my sphere and capacity; envying none, praising thee, loving thee, admiring thee, cordially rejoycing in thee for all thy gifts and graces to others, and all thy rewards to them, and their labours for thee, accounting my self weaker than the weakest of all thy Saints, and the most rude and unskilful of all thy Ministers.

O my soul, thou hast a great account to make to God, thou must dye, thou must dye, and come to judgment. O watch and pray that I enter not into temptation; spare not pains and labour, entreat my Fathers blessing. I need his help in many respects, above many, wanting those helps and abilities which many have; be the more abundant in prayer. Accustom my self to early rising, lose not the morning-season, and reserve for my soul a space in the Evening for prayer and meditation: My Bible, and Prayer, and Meditation, are like to be the main of my Library. O that I could but ply these three Books, I should not I am sure be a puny in the best sort of knowledg. *He whose delight is in the law of the*



the Lord, and in the same doth meditate day and night: shall be like a tree planted by the Rivers of water, bringing forth his fruit in due season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doth shall prosper. And elsewhere he saith, I have more understanding then all my teachers, because thy testimonies are my meditation. If any man lack wisdom, let him beg it of God who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. Promise me, O my soul, to be diligent in these three studies and exercises, and I shall need to gratifie thee with no other recreation, than the fruit and success. Fervent praying, humble, holy, powerful praying, will furnish my understanding with choicest notions, and imprint the Image of God most lively upon my soul. Idleness in prayer is the way to spiritual beggery; I shall have but a ragged and tatter'd soul, I shall not be able to cover or conceal my wickedness from the world. I shall decline in grace, consumption and weakness will seize upon me, and justly may God desert me, and then woe be to me. There is no Crown but to him that prevaiileth. Sav not, that I am Gods Child, and cannot totally fall from grace. For if thou live after the flesh, thou shalt dye. If any man draw back, Gods soul shall have no pleasure in him. And let him that standeth take heed lest he fall. I do not say, that de-  
 voutly, thou shalt utterly fall away and perish.

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My belief is otherwise as to the event; but if thou do not proceed, thou shalt perish. And it is one piece of my Armour, *to pray with all prayer and supplication, in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance. Thou must continue instant in prayer,* my Salvation depends upon it. He that forbiddeth apostacy, forbiddeth all the helps and means of apostacy; he that bindeth to perseverance, bindeth to all the means, to pray, to watch and pray, to be instant in prayer, to be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord: there is nothing in the doctrine of the Saints perseverance rightly stated which alloweth or leadeth to the least licentiousness, nor to coldness, remissness, and inconstancy in prayer, but it engageth to prayer, and holy self-preserving fear. O take heed of the smallest beginnings to apostacy, and a declining state. And there is no way to avoid it but by eagerness, constancy, power and spirit in prayer. I do utterly despair that thou shalt prosper in any thing without prayer. I charge thee from the Lord, stand in awe of his command; I lay an engagement upon thee by this paper, that thou shalt be conscientious in all prayer, through the grace that is in Jesus Christ. And if thou wilfully fail, let this paper be witness against thee, and be sure my sin will find me out. The Lord preserve every friend of mine from that spirit which is not a praying spirit; spiritual life must have motion, vent and exercise, and this is principally by prayer. I feel and know that

that the more grace I have, the more I covet after grace, and the more ardent and thirsty my soul is after it. And the more I pray, the more God is with me, and my soul hath more sweetness and more strength. And it is a great misery as well as sin to be lukewarm in prayer; for it makes it tedious, and increaseth guilt. If thou think it good to go no further on in the way to heaven, pray not at all; either pray to purpose, or pray not. If prayer be good for ought, do it with all thy might; if it be of no use, quite lay it by. Tremble to have my lukewarm prayers abhorred by God, and spewed out of his mouth, and cast in my face as dung. Eternity, eternity, eternity, O my soul, lies upon every prayer. I am praying to an all-seeing, heart-piercing, most holy God, in the name of glorified Jesus, the Intercessor, for a soul more precious than a thousand worlds, undone, undone, undone for ever, if praying I speed not. If I get to heaven it must be by this trade of begging.

*Encouragement and Counsel to such as in evil and hazardous times give way and entertainment to Jesus Christ, in his Ministers and Saints, to come into their Families, and worship God.*

**T**Hough Christ be not present upon earth corporally and carnally, he is truly present by his Spirit, and he dwells in his Saints, and he reputes what is done to his Saints and Image, as done to himself, and hath promised that whosoever shall give, though but a cup of cold Water to a Disciple of Christ, in the name of a Dis-

ciple, shall not lose his reward, *Matt. 10. ult.*  
 Can we have better Guests to come into our houses, than the Saints and People of the most high, the excellent ones of the Earth, the friends of God, the members of Christ, the heirs of Glory, who are guarded by the Angels, and the great uphold of Church and Commonwealth? Can we have our houses better furnished, and perfumed, and adorned, than with the Presence of Christ, and by prayer, and reading Scripture, and worshipping God; and singing praises to his name? Can we be afraid, or ashamed of honouring the Name, and worshipping of our God, and seeking the welfare of our own souls and others, in a way which is warranted by the word of God, and the example of the wisest and holiest Saints; and there is not a grace in the bosoms of the faithful, nor any holy thought or motion arising in the hearts of the Saints, but it consenteth to the same, and alloweth it, and fighteth against all the carnal workings and suggestions of the flesh? Can we think that if we entertain the Saints and people of God to pray with us, and for us, and help us against all the enemies of our souls, and befriend and bestead us with their prayers to God for forgiveness, and grace, and peace, and for Gods blessing upon soul and body; upon us and ours, and for our universal help and comfort throughout our whole life, and against the hour of death; and in all the days and times of tryal, and sorrow, and fear, and temptation, and suffering, and desertion; is not prayer useful for all these, and the joynt-

joynt-prayer of Saints? and shall we think that if we set open our doors to them for such exercises, we shall be losers, or do a work of which we have cause to be ashamed, or repent?

O how glad was *Zachens* to have Christ to come into his house! how glad was *Levi*, or *Matthew* the publican, when he made Christ a feast in his house! how glad were *Martha* and *Mary*, when they had Christ preaching in their house! It was not long that the Ark of God did abide with the house of *Obed-Edom*, and God blessed him for it with many gracious children And how zealous was King *David* to have the Ark and Tabernacle to his own house. Look what the Ark and Tabernacle were then, that are Christs Ministers, Saints, and prayer, and worship, now. How glad was the poor *Gaoler* to have *Paul* and *Silas* to come into his house, and preach and baptize, in a time when they were persecuted and imprisoned for the name of Christ! And no sooner was *Lydia* converted to the faith, but she constrains the Apostles to come into her house, *Acts* 16. When *Peter* was in Prison, the Saints gather together, they are found praying at midnight, and the Lord sends his Angel and releases *Peter*, and brings him to the Saints, as a return of their prayers, and gracious owning of their meeting, *Act*. 12. When *Laban* saw *Abraham's* Servant, he salutes him, *Come in thou blessed of the Lord, wherefore standest thou without?* Gen. 24. The Saints are the blessed ones of the Lord; mens laws forbid them from meeting privately together, above four besides them of the Family, but no where doth the

Lord forbid so. Yea, the Lord saith, *Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, and just, and profitable, and of good report, and praise-worthy, think on these things, and practise them*, Phil. 4. And it is a thing godly and commendable, for Christian people to meet together to worship the Lord. He hath promised to be present with them. Magistrates and Rulers ought to protect, and not to punish such godly meetings; they ought to encourage, and not restrain them. And if they do restrain them, and threaten us with penalties, we are not therefore to surcease any part of our duty. We are to be prudent and discreet, and not to give any just cause of offence to any; but if they take offence when none is given, it is their own blame, and not ours. If any man will be Christs disciple, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Christ. We must hate Friends, and Houses, and Lands, and Liberty, and Life it self, in comparison of Christ and his Gospel, *Luk. 14. 26, 33*. We do not love the Lord sincerely, if we love any thing better than him. If we be ashamed or afraid to serve him now, and to own despised Saints and duties, he will one day disown us, and separate us from himself, and from his Saints.

I am far from encouraging any to carnal opposition to rulers Laws, or precipitating any to any thing irregular and unwarrantable. The wisdom from above is always pure and peaceable. And in evil times great prudence and wariness must be used, and many things may be forborn for peace-sake, and the common good and interest of the Church. And for so much as I can discern by all the discretion and  
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judgment which I have, and can make upon my duty with respect to the times, and all circumstant matters, I cannot see but that such meetings as I and others commonly use privately on the week-day, in just subordination to publick meetings, and no way confronting or undermining them, but greatly befriending them, that they are very useful and warrantable, and seasonable, and the restraint and inhibition of them is a thing to be lamented; and the fears and carnal compliances of Christians denying their houses and presence, and attendance to such meetings, proceed from carnality and a worldly spirit. And I cannot but lament and mourn for any such, and seasonably encourage both my self and all my friends, and any that I have any interest in, or relation to, that they will look upon it as their duty, and as their interest and priviledg in this day of tryal, to appear and stand for God, and own his truth and cause, and faithful friends and adherents, and take heed of carnal compliances, and consulting with flesh and blood, and asking counsel of the flesh, and walking in the way of worldly wisdom and carnal policy. What if you suffer the utmost in so doing, it will bear you out if you have an upright heart; the cause or matter in which you suffer is righteous and of God, and you may expect Divine protection, provision, blessing and comfort in any such suffering. And you have great cause to rejoice if you should be called forth to suffer, or should be compelled to lose any thing upon such account. It is not an arbitrary thing, except we will say that incumbent duties, and ordinances

nances, and commandments from God, are arbitrary; for this duty hath its foundation in the Word of God. And there is that in the hearts of Saints which will reason and contend for it, and is able to overthrow and silence all objections and reasonings that can be brought against it. And if we practice faith and self-denial, resolution and constancy, and impartially keep Gods commands, we shall experience that profit by this duty which shall abundantly counter-vail all our losses, and shall experience more that these meetings be of God. I am sure they are friends to the publick good, they are instrumental and useful for the conversion, growth and consolation of souls, they are of exceeding prevalency with God, they are hated by Satan, they are opposed and striven against by the flesh, they will prove edifying to them whose hearts and aims are sincere; and for others, they must be left to God and themselves.

I would advise all to be prudent, and very humble and meek, and to take heed of corrupting and perverting a profitable duty by a carnal spirit, by any insolent, over-forward and indiscreet speech or behaviour, and not to presume upon their own strength, or to practice any malignity or unpeaceable unmannerly behaviour towards any which be against such meetings, especially towards Rulers, and to do their duty with all the silence & reservedness that they can, and to avoid noise & ostentation, and whatsoever may provoke to wrath and strife; and not to look upon such private meetings as superior to the publick, or more necessary than them, or to be independent upon them, or to be managed with

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contention and opposition, nor any that come there  
 to look upon themselves as a party separate from  
 the rest of the Saints and brethren; nor would I ad-  
 vise any ordinary private Christian in such meetings  
 to attempt to preach, or expound Scriptures, but to  
 keep themselves within safe bounds, reading Scrip-  
 tures and godly books, repeating Sermons, prayer,  
 and praise, and holy and wise conference is safe and  
 good, and will much edifie; and concerning this last  
 of conference, if done, it should be done with cauti-  
 on and wisdom, and just observance, except some able  
 Minister or Christian be present, it may (except in  
 special cases) do better to spend all the time in the  
 other exercises. These things should be advised, and  
 whatsoever else is necessary in order to holiness, edi-  
 fication and peace; to redeem time from the world,  
 and low diverting matters, to spend in such exerci-  
 ses as these, is very profitable. And I am perswaded  
 that those families which do sincerely entertain and  
 welcome such exercises, are not without a blessing  
 from God upon them. And I for my part think such  
 meeting in our houses, to be matter of thanksgiving;  
 that we may have the prayers of Gods people, that  
 we may be counted worthy to have Christ to come  
 under our roof in his poorest members. O prayer is  
 an unknown benefit. The prayers of the Saints are  
 great riches, they are the Chariots of *Israel*, and the  
 horsemen thereof. There is great blessing which re-  
 dounds by prayer. This is a matter which is of God,  
 and will stand, and praying Saints will be had in ho-  
 nour and esteem, while sin and affliction, and morta-  
 lity, and weakness, and want, and misery, and sorrow  
 are

are the common portion of all sorts in this world. And therefore let no timorous person be discouraged; let no resolute soldier of Christ faint, let none of Christs faithful ones in these evil times keep off from their duty, & their benefit. Open your hearts, and open your doors. Invite the Saints to come and pray with you, to help you against the common enemy of mankind; be more glad of a holy society of praying Saints in your houses, than of great riches; what know you what blessings & mercies God may grant to your soul and body, to you and all yours, by their prayers? you are the rather beholding to Christ, and to them, that they come to you. The benefit is yours, though they are sharers with you. The trouble can be but small; you need to make no provision for them. Room and leave to pray is all. They are Saints, God is with them, Gods blessing is upon them; it is good to be where Gods presence and blessing is. A willing mind, an humble heart, a soul truly hungry after righteousness, smarting for sin in grievous desertion, sorely visited with sickness, crying out of pains and oppressions, 5 AP 58 a young man having an awakened Conscience, and a lively sight of God and Heaven, and Hell, all these would be glad of a combination of prayers, which like a threefold cord are not easily broken. I conclude with thanks to God for all the blessing & benefit of such private exercises to mine own soul, and many more, and for all the experience I have of their usefulness, and that both in this place, and elsewhere they are on foot; and it pleaseth the Lord to bear testimony thereto, and own them with his presence and blessing, & many considerable effects, & gracious returns day by day. FINIS.

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